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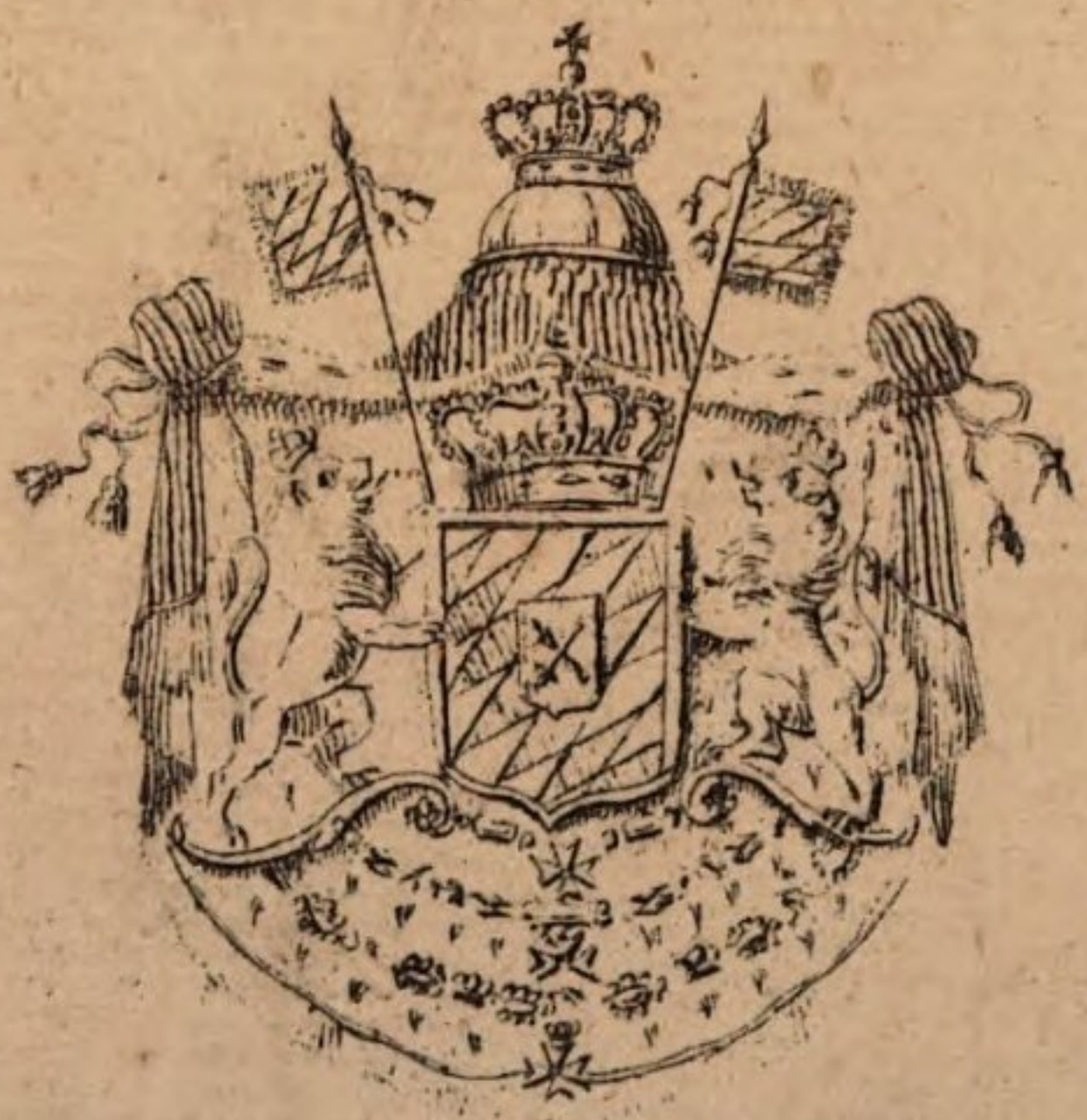

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TALES OF A GRANDFATHER.

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Nº 6, RUE DU PONT-DE-LODI.

TALES

OF

A GRANDFATHER;

BEING STORIES TAKEN FROM THE

HISTORY OF FRANCE.

FIRST SERIES,

FROM THE PERIOD OF CÆSAR'S CONQUEST TILL THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

INSCRIBED TO

MASTER JOHN HUGH LOCKHART.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PARIS:

PUBLISHED BY A. AND W. GALIGNANI,

AT THE ENGLISH, FRENCH, ITALIAN, GERMAN, AND SPANISH LIBRARY, N° 18, RUE VIVIENNE.

1831.

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TALES OF A GRANDFATHER.

CHAPTER I.

Wise and peaceful Reign of Saint Louis—his Expedition against Tunis, and Death—The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies given by the Pope to Charles of Anjou, brother of Saint Louis—Arrival of Charles before Tunis, with Reinforcements—Treaty with the Sultan—the Crusade abandoned—Vigorous Administration of Philip the Hardy—his Second Marriage—The Queen accused by her Husband's Favourite of poisoning her Step-son—she is acquitted, and the Favourite disgraced and executed—Wars to decide the Possession of the Crown of the Two Sicilies—the Sicilian Vespers—Philip's unsuccessful Attempt to take possession of the Kingdom of Arragon—his Death.

KING LOUIS, upon his return to France, manifested the same prudence, wisdom, and judgment in his measures, which he had shown in Syria to less effectual purpose. He hastened to make peace with England, in consideration of which he received Henry III at Paris with sumptuous hospitality. The claims of England upon Normandy were now rather antiquated. « I would willingly restore the province, » said the King of France to the English monarch, in a confidential

manner, « but my peers and barons will not consent to my doing so.» King Henry therefore exchanged his claims on Normandy, Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou, for some trifling territories adjacent to Gascony, the only portion of Henry II's French dominions which his grandson still retained.

Louis now reigned in peace and honour. From the universal confidence reposed in his justice and equity, both his own subjects and strangers were frequently in the custom of referring to him matters which were in debate between them. This course was the more resorted to, as the good king frequently indemnified at his own expense the party against whom he gave his award. Thus, when the queen's mother, the Countess of Provence, disputed the right of some castles with the king's brother, the Count of Anjou, Louis decreed that they should be purchased by the latter from the Count of Provence, but at the same time gave his brother money to pay the price. In any dispute with the crown, the opposite party found it most advantageous to trust to the candour of the king himself, who always judged his own side of the cause with the greatest severity. Thus this good king gained the hearts of the insubordinate vassals who had often conspired against his predecessors.

This able prince was farther distinguished as a legislator, in which capacity, the manners and customs of that age being considered, he makes a distinguished figure in French history,

and may fairly be preferred to any sovereign who at that time flourished in Europe. In particular, he endeavoured to maintain the tranquillity of the kingdom, by the suppression of the numerous private quarrels among the great vassals of the crown, and greatly curbed the right which they assumed of taking the field like independent sovereigns, as had been formerly their custom. These great lords, overawed by the reputation and power of the king, were now, generally, compelled to bring their contests before his tribunal, instead of deciding them by arms.

Saint Louis also laid under restrictions the trial by single combat, at least as much as the manners of the time, partial to that species of decision, would permit the alteration.

By these and other enactments, Saint Louis studied to make his people happy, while his own demeanour indicated too fully that he had at his heart the rooted feeling of having sustained discomfiture and disgrace in Egypt, where he had most hoped to deserve success, and to acquire glory. His robes of ceremony were laid aside, and he seldom shared personally in the banquets which he provided for his courtiers and nobles. The French king was, for humility's sake, attended, even at meals, by troops of beggars, to whom he distributed provisions with his own royal hand. There was something of affectation in this; but the principle on which he acted seems, from other circumstances, to have been sincere.

His desire for the general peace of Europe, and his efforts to appease the quarrels of the great, incurred the censure of some of his statesmen, who wished to persuade him that he would act with more policy by suffering their discords to augment, and even by aggravating their quarrels, than by endeavouring to end them. To such advisers, Louis, in that case justly deserving the epithet of Saint, used to reply, « they counselled him ill; for,» added he, « should the neighbouring princes and great barons perceive that I instigated wars amongst them, or at least that I did not labour to restore peace, they might well imagine that I acted thus either through malevolence or indifference—an idea which would be sure to tempt them to enter into dangerous confederacies against me; besides that, in acting otherwise than I do, I should provoke the indignation of God, who has written in his Gospel, 'Blessed are the peace-makers, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'» In like manner, his advisers upbraided him that he neglected to take advantage of the weakness of Henry III, to wrest from the English the considerable share which they still retained of the French territory in Gascony. On this subject, also, he defended himself by proving that an honest and upright conduct was the best policy which a king could observe; « he was aware,» he said, « that John of England had justly forfeited the greater part of his dominions in France; nor did he meditate the extravagant generosity of

restoring them to his son. On the other hand, he felt himself obliged to abstain from coveting that portion to which Henry retained a legal right through his grandmother Eleanor.»

While thus behaving with moderation and generosity to his neighbours, and even to his enemies, Louis performed in his own person the duty of a judge, and was often found, like the Kings of Judah, sitting in the gates of his palace, to render justice indifferently to all those who presented themselves to ask it of him.

By his attention to the public good, as well in making laws as in enforcing them, the king became deservedly beloved, and proved effectually that no subtleties of worldly policy could carry an empire to such a height of peace and happiness, as the generous and worthy conduct of a prince acting upon religious and moral principles.

With all that was so excellent in the character and conduct of St Louis, he was subject, as we have already hinted, to a strain of superstition, the great vice of the age, which impelled him into measures that finally brought ruin upon himself, and severe losses upon the state. At the bottom of his thoughts, he still retained the insane hope of being more successful in a new crusade than in that in which he had encountered defeat and captivity; and after sixteen years had been devoted to the improvement and good government of his own dominions, he again prepared a fleet and army to invade the territories of

a Mahometan prince. Neither Palestine nor Egypt was the object of this new attack. The city of Tunis, upon the coast of Africa, was the destined object of the expedition. Credulous in all concerning the holy war, Louis conceived that the Mahometan king of Tunis was willing to turn Christian, and become his ally, or vassal; and, by possessing a powerful influence, through the occupation of this fertile country, he hoped he should make the conversion of this prince the means of pushing his conquests, and extending Christianity over Egypt and Palestine also.

It was in the year 1270, that he gave finally this proof that his superstition was as active and as credulous as ever. He carried with him, as before, the princes of his own family, and many of his principal vassals. The most remarkable of these, both by merit and rank, was Edward, Prince of Wales, who seized that opportunity to exhibit against the infidels fresh proofs of the courage and military conduct which he had displayed in his own country during the civil conflicts called the Barons' Wars. He was followed by a body of select troops, and distinguished himself greatly.

This expedition, which formed the eighth, and proved the last crusade, was in its outset assailed by a tempest, by which the fleet, ill constructed to encounter storms, sustained great loss. In three days, however, Louis assembled the greater part of his armament before Tunis. Here the infidel monarch, whom he had hoped

to convert to the Christian religion, instead of showing the expected docility, received him at the head of a strong army, with which he prepared to defend his city against the invaders. Louis immediately landed; and the French, in their disembarkation, obtained some successes. These, however, were only momentary, for the crusaders had no sooner formed a close siege around the town, which was too strong to be carried save by blockade, than diseases of a destructive character broke out in their army. The want of water and forage increased the progress of contagion; and constant skirmishing with the enemy, for which the Moors chose the most advantageous positions, added the waste of the sword to that of epidemic disease. The infection approached the person and family of the king; his eldest son died of a fever; his youngest son, Tristan, who received birth in Damietta, during the miseries of his father's first crusade, now passed from existence amidst the ruin of his second attempt. Louis himself, attacked by the fever which had robbed him of two sons, called to his pillow Philip, his eldest remaining child, and exhausted what remained of life and strength in giving him his parting instructions.

On the 25th of August, 1270, this good king died, to whose reign, one only misfortune attached, namely, that too little of it was spent in the bosom of his own kingdom, and in attention to its interests, which he understood so well. But France, so populous and powerful a nation,

speedily recovered the loss incurred by the unfortunate crusades, while the effect of the wise laws introduced by Saint Louis, continued to influence his kingdom through a long train of centuries.

Meantime, Charles, Count of Anjou, the brother of Saint Louis, had obtained a crown for his own brow, which he had hoped to render yet more stable, had his brother succeeded in the expedition against Tunis, to which attempt he was preparing to bring him assistance. To understand this important point of history, it is necessary to look a little back.

The Emperor Frederick II had been heir to the pretensions of the imperial house of Suabia to both the Sicilies; in other words, to those territories now belonging to the kingdom of Naples. But over these kingdoms the Popes had always asserted a right of homage, similar to that which King John surrendered to the Church in England. Upon the death of Frederick, these Italian and Sicilian dominions were usurped by his natural son, called Manfroy, to the prejudice of the emperor's nephew and lawful heir, a youth named Conradin. Manfroy exercised with vigour the rights which he had so boldly assumed. To the real dominions of Naples and Sicily, he added a nominal claim over the kingdom of Jerusalem, though long since conquered by the Saracens. In assuming these titles, Manfroy, or Manfred, disowned all homage to the Pope; he even invaded the territories of the Church, when the

pontiff disputed his title. Pope Urban, who then wore the mitre, together with Clement IV, his successor, who adhered to his policy, began successively to use their spiritual weapons. They excommunicated Manfroy, and were only at a loss upon whom to confer the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, of which they deprived him by the formal sentence of the Church. This was a difficult question; for, though the Popes claimed the privilege of conferring the right where they pleased, it was necessary to chuse a candidate strong enough to cope with Manfroy; and it was not easy to select such a one. In this uncertainty, the sovereignty was offered first to one of Saint Louis's children, but declined by the good king, who could not think it consistent with morality to profit by a forfeiture, which, though declared by the voice of the Church, had not been incurred by the legal heir. Conradin's right, it was clear, could not therefore be affected by Manfred, an intruder, whose deeds could not prejudice the rights of his cousin. Accordingly, Louis declined to avail himself of the grant of the Pope in favour of any of his sons. The Pope next offered the kingdoms of Sicily and Jerusalem to Edmund, son of the King of England. But although this prince went so far as to assume the title of king, his father, Henry III, was too much embarrassed with the wars of his barons at home, to admit of his son's finally accepting a donation which he could not have the means of supporting.

At length the Pope resolved to name as mo-

narch of the Two Sicilies, and nominal King of Jerusalem, Charles, Count of Anjou, the brother of Saint Louis, a man of a bold, and even ferocious character, one who would act with sufficient vigour, and without embarrassing himself with any scruples, in defence of the right assigned him by the Pope. Saint Louis acquiesced in the nomination of his brother, though he had declined to profit by the grant to his sons. And although his royal brother was rather passive than active in his favour, the Count of Anjou was able to assemble an army competent to the enterprise. He marched into the Neapolitan territory, and engaged Manfroy in a pitched battle, fought near Beneventum, in which the latter lost his kingdom and his life.

A competitor for the kingdoms of the Sicilies now arose to reclaim the crown usurped by Manfroy. This was Conradin, nephew of the Emperor Frederick, and whose legal right of succession had been usurped by the late possessor. This young prince had little difficulty in assembling a strong party, consisting of the friends of the imperial faction, which in the beginning threatened to extinguish the rising power of Charles of Anjou. The valour, or the fortune, of the French prince was, however, predominant once more. Conradin was defeated by Charles in a great battle, made prisoner, and, by an act of great injustice and cruelty, tried, and put to death upon a scaffold, for the prosecution of a

claim of succession to which he was alike called by justice and by nature.

When, therefore, the rash expedition of Louis against Tunis took place (A.D. 1270), Charles, now King of Sicily, was eager in encouraging his brother to a war in which he thought less of the conquest of the Holy Land, than of subjecting Tunis to European dependence, and making it an appanage of his own kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

When the eighth crusade had nearly come to a melancholy termination, by the death of Louis and his two sons, Charles, King of the Sicilies, appeared before Tunis with a fleet loaded with provisions and reinforcements. As the fresh troops advanced to support the siege, the Arabs checked their approach by putting in motion the sands of the desert, which, driven by a violent wind upon the strangers, prevented their attempts to march up to the attack of the place. Upon a second occasion of the same kind, however, the natives were less successful, being drawn into an ambuscade, where they suffered severely by the swords of the Europeans. The sultan began now to propose terms of submission, agreeing to pay a ransom to the King of the Sicilies of forty thousand crowns a-year—to defray the expense of the war—to allow the preaching of Christian priests, and the exercise of the Christian religion in his dominions, with some other concessions, which, excepting the payment of

the money, were rather nominal than real. Notwithstanding these favourable conditions, the French and Sicilian monarchs were blamed by the voice of Christendom—Philip for impatience, and Charles for covetousness. Of all the princes in the crusade, Edward of England alone, afterwards the First of that name, and one of the most politic princes who ever lived, refused, as far as he was concerned, to consent to this treaty. He also professed his determination to proceed to Palestine, where Acre, the last of the fortresses which owned the Christian authority, was on the point of surrender to the infidels. « I will enter Acre,» said young Edward, striking his breast, « though only Fowin, my groom, should follow me!» He went forward accordingly with his little band of English; but the feats which he performed were of small note, considering the personal qualities of the prince, and his expedition is chiefly famed for the romantic courage of his princess Eleanor, who attended him. This faithful and courageous lady is said to have sucked the wound which her husband received from an envenomed weapon, and to have thus endangered her own life to save his. After the treaty of Tunis had been concluded, the kings of France and Sicily returned to their dominions—Philip eager to take possession of the crown which had fallen to him by inheritance, Charles desirous to secure and to enjoy that which he had obtained by conquest.

Philip, the third of that name, called the

Hardy, seems to have been disposed to distinguish himself by enforcing the wise laws of King Louis, his father, for preventing private wars among his vassals. He had soon an opportunity to show this disposition, in pacifying a feud between the Count of Foix and the Lord of Casaubon. The latter had been assaulted by the powerful Count, notwithstanding he resided in a castle assigned him by the sovereign for his abode, and was under his express protection. The king, at the head of his royal forces, besieged the castle of Foix, compelled the Count to surrender, detained him a certain time in prison, and only dismissed him upon complete submission. The vigour of the government upon this occasion shows the permanent result of the just and firm conduct of Saint Louis. But the king's most remarkable adventures occurred in his own family, and were of a very distressing nature.

In his return through Italy, King Philip had the misfortune to lose his beautiful wife, Isabel, who had not hesitated to follow him to the melancholy crusade in which the royal family sustained so much loss. In the course of this journey, this lady, being then near her confinement, was thrown from her horse in crossing a river, and died in consequence. Isabel, thus untimely cut off, left four sons; Louis, who died by poison; Philip, who reigned after his father; Charles of Valois, father of the branch from whom sprung the French kings of that house, and Robert, who died young.

After the king's return to France, the council remonstrated with him on the inexpediency of his remaining single, and he was induced to marry, as his second wife, Mary the daughter of Henry, the sixth Duke of Brabant. The life of this unfortunate princess was rendered melancholy, and that of her husband disturbed, by a strange succession of misfortunes, in consequence of the machinations of an unworthy favourite. Mary of Brabant bore a son the year after her marriage, and within six years afterwards, two daughters; a fair lineage, which naturally confirmed the love which the king bore to her, as a beautiful and affectionate woman. But jealousy and discord were sown between them. The artificer of this mischief was Pierre de la Brosse; he was a person of low origin, and had appeared at court originally in the capacity of a barber. By this, however, we are not to infer the degree of ignorance or meanness which moderns annex to the word. A barber in those times received a medical education, and was in effect a surgeon, applying his skill to the cure of wounds, as well as to the arrangement of the beard and hair. Still, however, it was a menial office, and it was thought wonderful that such a man should rise to be a royal favourite. Upon the death of Saint Louis, Philip advanced La Brosse, who seems to have been a man of talent as well as art, to the rank of royal chamberlain, and employed him in the administration of some important affairs. He is said, as often happens

with upstart favourites, to have abused the king's kindness, and betrayed his trust, using his favour as the means of unjust oppression. A natural dislike arose between the queen, who thought her husband trusted too much to this unworthy man, and the favourite, who foresaw his own ruin in the predominant influence of the young princess. La Brosse, having once entertained this jealousy of the queen, is said to have taken every opportunity to prejudice Philip against her, by intimating, from time to time, that his consort was actuated by the general dislike against Philip's children by the former marriage, commonly imputed to step-mothers. The favourite caused it to be insinuated, from various quarters, into the king's private ear, that his wife often complained of her misfortune in bearing children who were destined to become the vassals of those of the first marriage, and that she said their case was the harder, if, though born when their father was upon the throne, they must necessarily be postponed to the children who came into the world when Philip was only a prince.

About this time, Louis, the king's eldest son by his first marriage, prince and heir of France, was seized suddenly by a malignant fever, which hurried him to his grave. The fatal disorder was attended with violent derangement in his stomach, livid spots upon his person, and other symptoms, which the age ascribed to poison. On these suspicious circumstances, La Brosse, who

had the court filled with his relations and dependents, spread rumours tending to fix the crime upon Queen Mary, whom he had already loaded with calumnies to the same effect. The queen, on the contrary, accused La Brosse of having himself administered the poison to the young prince, with the purpose of charging it against her. The king, divided betwixt fondness for his wife, and habitual partiality for his favourite, did not well know, betwixt two averments both abhorrent to his imagination, which there was ground to believe. Perhaps, in so dark a transaction, we may be justified in believing that no crime at all was committed, and that what were considered as marks of poison, were merely symptoms of a putrid fever. Such, however, is seldom the opinion of the public in any age, who are peculiarly addicted to assign remarkable and nefarious causes for the death of great persons.

The king, in his distress and perplexity, had recourse to a species of explanation suited only to an ignorant age. He dispatched the Bishop of Bayeux, and the Abbot of St Denis, to visit a nun, or beguine, then at Nivelles, who was supposed to possess the gift of discovering by inspiration the most concealed transactions. The royal envoys were directed to consult, of course, with this great authority, and to learn from her the real particulars of the young prince's death. Her first confession, taken from her by the Bishop of Bayeux alone, seemed to criminate the

queen. This was thought suspicious, because the bishop was a near connexion of La Brosse, and interested in deciding the dispute in his relation's favour. But whatever his secret bias was, the prelate refused to bring forward a charge founded on what the nun had told him in confession. The prophetess herself seemed equally unwilling to speak plain. To a second inquiry by the Abbot of St Denis, after that by the Bishop of Bayeux, she refused to answer; and the matter seemed to go against the queen. But in this uncertainty Philip deputed the Bishop of Dol, and Arnolph de Vismale, a knight templar, who were considered as impartial persons, to examine the nun a second time. To these she frankly declared, that the king ought not to give any credit to such accusations as might be brought against his wife, since they all arose out of calumny.

At this time, John of Brabant came to the court of France, averring the innocence of his sister, Queen Mary, demanding that her honour should be fully cleared, and offering the combat to any who should impeach it. This accusation hastened La Brosse's ruin. The favourite was accused of having corresponded with the King of Castile, with whom Philip of France was then at war, and, being found guilty of this crime, was sent to prison, disgraced, and afterwards ignominiously executed. The Duke of Brabant had gained credit for the part he had hitherto taken in his sister's favour; but when the French saw

La Brosse executed without an open trial, and beheld the Duke of Brabant, and some lords of his party, attend upon the execution, with more personal feeling of vengeance than became their rank, the tide began to turn, and La Brosse was considered as having fallen a victim to the queen and her faction. Mary, however, long survived her husband, and was treated with the greatest respect by the family of his former wife, several of whom she beheld successively upon the throne.

The affairs of England, and of Italy, were the next objects of importance during Philip the Hardy's reign.

It was while this king filled the throne that the English began again to be heard of in France, having been long of little consequence there, owing to the violence of their domestic feuds. Edward I had long been busied in reducing his subjects of England to obedience, but, having perfectly succeeded, became now desirous of asserting his claim to such of the English territories in France as could yet be gathered out of the wreck of the forfeiture declared by Philip Augustus. For this purpose Edward resided three years in France, from June 1286, to August 1289. He rendered homage to Philip the Hardy, and transacted his affairs with great wisdom, honour, and success.

The bloody wars which long deluged Europe with slaughter, in order to decide the possession of Naples and Sicily, continued to agitate France

during this reign. It is true, that Charles of Anjou, King of Sicily, exercised, by commission from the Pope, the high offices of Vicar of the Empire, and Senator of Rome. He was also, besides being the actual reigning monarch of the Two Sicilies, invested with the nominal sovereignty of the kingdom of Jerusalem, upon the principle, it may be supposed, that he who had obtained the substance, should also have the nominal possession of the shadow; for the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem had ceased to exist. Notwithstanding these dignities, Charles of Anjou did not, by any means, sit secure on his throne. He had involved himself imprudently with the Church, to which he owed his kingdom originally. Pope Nicolas, who, bore much ill-will towards Charles, deprived him of the office of Vicar of the Empire, and the dignity of Roman Senator, in the hope, it is supposed, of provoking him to some act which might give the Holy See a pretence for depriving him of the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, which she had bestowed.

The vices of that prince were yet more hurtful to him than the displeasure of the Pope; and the luxury, insolence, and cruelty, by which his French troops provoked the general resentment of the Sicilians, were still more fatal to his cause. A rival soon arose when his reign became unpopular. The imperialists still retained a strong party among the Sicilians. Don Pedro, King of Arragon—who had married the daughter of Manfroy, defeated and slain by Charles of Anjou,

—now claimed the kingdom of Sicily in the right of his wife, and threatened to reconquer it from the French. The passions of the inhabitants seconded, in an extraordinary manner, the pretensions of Don Pedro. Incensed at the liberties which the French unceremoniously took with the females of their families, the Sicilians formed a scheme of insurrection against these petulant and insolent strangers, equally remarkable for its extent, the secrecy with which it was carried on, and the number of Frenchmen who perished.

This was the famous insurrection, known by the name of the Sicilian Vespers. The plot bore, that, at the tolling of the evening bell for prayers, on Easter-day (A. D. 1282), the islanders should rush suddenly upon the French strangers, and put them to death without exception. This plot was contrived with such surprising secrecy and unanimity, and executed with such general fury, that in less than two hours a general massacre had taken place, of all the French, whatever their age, sex, or condition. Monks put to death their brethren; priests slew each other upon the very altar; fathers killed their daughters, who had been married to strangers, and every other horror took place, which could be practised by a vindictive nation, assuming at once the trade of assassins.

This massacre, intended to be decisive of the controversy between Anjou and Arragon, was, like many other great historical crimes, disappointing in its results. The kingdom of France

was thrilled with horror, but at the same time seized with a thirst of revenge, for so general and dreadful an assassination. Numbers of the best warriors in that kingdom offered their services to Charles of Anjou, to avenge the death of their murdered countrymen. Pedro of Arragon, finding his adherents unable to cope with the high-famed French chivalry, was reduced to evade the combat, by a device, the issue of which considerably hurt his reputation. In order to get rid of the pressure of the French force in Sicily, and to avoid the necessity of encountering the numerous and excellent forces which had come to espouse the French cause, Pedro dispatched a challenge to Charles of Anjou, defying him to meet him with a hundred knights, and decide their differences by the issue of that encounter. Bordeaux, as a neutral territory, was assigned as the place of combat. Charles, who was by no means deficient in personal courage, immediately accepted the defiance, and went to the place appointed with his hundred attendants. In this he acted imprudently, considering that, by prosecuting the advantages he possessed, he might have made himself master of Sicily, which was the object of contention; an opportunity which was lost by his departure for Bordeaux. Neither did Pedro ever mean actually to encounter him and his knights, as his challenge implied. He indeed kept his appointment; but he appeared in disguise, and avoided the combat, alleging, that, as Philip, King of France, was present in

Bordeaux at the time, and was lord paramount of the town, it was no longer an equal place of meeting, for a prince who came to fight with that king's uncle. Accordingly, he left the place with little honour; for as Philip had few or no soldiers along with him, the seneschal of the King of England, who was actually commandant of the place, was sufficiently strong to have afforded a fair field of combat, both to French and Spaniards. But Pedro obtained his object, which was the opportunity to prosecute the war in Sicily, with a better chance of success than when he had Charles for an opponent.

Charles of Anjou had left in Sicily his son, a high-spirited young man, called Charles the Lame, from an accident which had befallen him in youth. He was commissioned to command as regent during his father's absence. This youth, although warned by his father to act upon the defensive, rashly encountered the fleet of Arragon, commanded by the famous Andrew Doria, the ally of Don Pedro. Charles the Lame was defeated and taken by this celebrated mariner, and his father, after at first seeming to support the calamity with firmness, gave way to grief, and died at sixty-six years of age.

In the meantime, the King of France, to whom the Pope, according to his custom of dealing kingdoms at pleasure, had assigned that of Arragon, transferable to any of his sons whom he should name, conveyed the right thus vested in him to his third son, Charles of Valois, and pre-

pared, with a strong army and navy, to put him in possession of his new dominions.

With this purpose, Philip the Hardy invaded Catalonia, and besieged Gerona. Pedro of Arragon came to its relief, with a small and flying army. Rollo of Nesle, Constable of France, drew the Spanish prince into an ambuscade, by showing only a small part of his forces. In this skirmish, Pedro had his face torn by the thrust of a lance, was nearly made prisoner, and obliged to cut the reins of his horse, in order to escape the grasp of a French man-at-arms. He escaped from the field, but died in consequence of the wound, and the fever which ensued. This success was, however, overbalanced by an advantage obtained by Doria, who was still at sea, over the French fleet. Many of Philip's vessels were sunk and destroyed; and as these were loaded with provisions for the use of the army besieging Gerona, the sufferings of the French, arising from the loss, became so extreme, that it was impossible for them to remain longer before the place. The siege was therefore raised, and the king, whose hopes were thus disappointed, withdrew to Perpignan, where he shortly after died of chagrin for the miscarriage of an undertaking which commenced so prosperously. This prince, although not a man of shining talent, bears, nevertheless, a fair character in the French annals, and is said to have been particularly scrupulous in the mode of raising the revenue from his people, who never complained of the sums exacted,

as they were levied with so much fairness and attention to the convenience of the indigent. It is impossible now to discover from what circumstance Philip derived his epithet of Hardy, as we are not aware of his having shown great personal courage. He displayed no high or distinguished qualities, a deficiency which was atoned for by his character being marked by none that were wicked or dangerous.

CHAPTER II.

Accession of Philip the Fair—Claim of England to the Province of Xaintonge—War between France and England—Edward I prevented by his Scottish Wars from carrying it on with vigour—Confederacy of Continental Princes against Philip, instigated by Edward—Peace and mutual Alliance between France and England—Philip's Quarrel with Pope Boniface—his good understanding with the two succeeding Popes, who fix their residence at Avignon—Contest with Flanders—Dissolution of the Order of Knights of the Temple—Death of Philip the Fair, and Accession of Louis Hutin—Execution of Marrigny, the Favourite of the deceased Monarch, for alleged Embezzlement and Sorcery—Marriage and Death of Louis Hutin—Accession of Philip the Long, by virtue of the Salic Law, which excluded his Niece, the Princess Joan, daughter of Louis Hutin—Massacre of Jews and Lepers, in consequence of a suspicion that they had caused an Epidemic Disease throughout France, by poisoning the Wells—Death of Philip, and Accession of his Brother, Charles the Fair—Charles summons Edward II to do homage for his French Possessions—Investiture granted to the Prince of Wales, instead of his Father—Intrigues of Edward's Queen, Isabel, at the French Court—Death of Charles the Fair, with whom became extinct the Descendants in the First Line of Hugo Capet.

PHILIP IV, who succeeded his father, was surnamed *Le Bel*, or the Fair, from the beauty of

his countenance, and the majesty of his person. He was married to Joan, who was Queen of Navarre, as well as Countess of Champagne and Brie.

This prince's entrance on life took place at great disadvantage. His father had left an exhausted exchequer, and a ruinous and unsuccessful war undertaken with Spain, to vindicate the rights of his nephew, son of his sister Blanche, Queen of Castile, and to conquer the kingdom of Arragon, for Charles of Valois. Edward I, too, was now beginning to bestir himself in France, and perplexed the French king by a demand of the territory of Xaintonge, a district adjacent to the English possessions in Guienne. In this important matter, Philip, after examining the ancient treaties between the kingdoms, saw the necessity of acquiescing, and Edward became a party to a negotiation by which the quarrel with Castile was in some degree accommodated, and the peace of Europe in a great measure restored.

But in consequence of an accidental quarrel between a Norman and a Gascon sailor, which led to a battle betwixt their two vessels, that moderation which the young King of France had hitherto exhibited, seemed to be exchanged for hasty resentment, and a determination to proceed to extremities.

Upon this accidental provocation, and in resentment of the injury offered to his flag, the King of France issued a summons, commanding

Edward, as a peer of France, to appear before the French parliament, under pain of forfeiting his fiefs in that kingdom. Edward, though offended at such peremptory conduct, was desirous to avoid a rupture. He offered, with exemplary temperance, to yield to the French six castles which he held in Guienne, by way of security that he would submit to make amends, should he be found ultimately in the wrong, and also as pledges that he would meet with the King of France, and discuss their difference in an amicable conference. At the same time, Edward stipulated that the summons, a proceeding offensive to his dignity, should be withdrawn. Philip having solemnly agreed to this arrangement, broke through it nevertheless in a faithless manner. He took possession of the six fortresses, but only made use of them to facilitate the conquest of the English province of Gascony, for which purpose he marched an army under the High Constable into that territory. A French fleet and flying army was even employed to attack the coasts of England, by which Dover was burnt, and Kent invaded.

Notwithstanding these provocations, which were not to be endured by a monarch of Edward's temper, the King of England was extremely unwilling to engage in a war with France at this moment. He had been anxiously employed, during the last years of the thirteenth century, in the unjust attempt to possess himself of the sovereignty of Scotland; in which he seemed often

almost successful, but could never become completely so. Indeed, divided and dispirited as the kingdom then was, nothing was more easy than to overpower the Scots in the field; and yet such was the obstinacy of their resistance, that within a month or two after their subjugation appeared to be complete, the natives of this pertinacious country were again in arms. It would well have suited the policy of Edward to have postponed all other wars, until he had completed the conquest of Scotland, and for this purpose he was loath to accept of the various provocations which France seemed studiously to offer to him. Nevertheless, as King of England, he could not without dishonour, submit to the affront of being summoned before the French Parliament, and he was also nettled at the unworthy manner in which he had been cheated in the matter of Guienne, and at the loss he had sustained in that province. He therefore returned an answer of defiance to the King of France, and he sent a small army under his brother Edmund, to protract the war in France, at as little risk as might be, while he himself marched into Scotland, to finish his conquest of that country.

It may be here remarked, first, That the grievances which Edward I inflicted on Scotland, and by which he hoped to compel the people to rebellion, so as to form an excuse for confiscating and depriving of his kingdom, John Baliol, a monarch of his own creating, were very closely allied to the indignities which he himself expe-

rienced from the King of France, and to which he was personally so sensitive. Therefore the monarch, who exercised the same feudal tyranny towards others, his own dependents, could not with justice complain of similar usage from his own lord paramount.

To understand this, you must remember, that, by unfairly availing himself of the trust reposed in him by the Scots, who chose him to be umpire for deciding the succession to their crown, Edward I had assumed to himself, on very iniquitous grounds, the right and dignity of lord paramount of Scotland. Invested thus, though by no fair means, with the right of supremacy over that kingdom, Edward's next step was to summon John Baliol, the shadow whom he had set up as king, to attend and answer the complaints of the most insignificant persons who chose to bring an appeal from his decisions to the English courts of law in Westminster. Edward's object in this injurious conduct, was undoubtedly to mortify the pride of the Scots and of their king, and to seek an opportunity of declaring, as he afterwards did, that the kingdom of Scotland was forfeited to himself.

Now, this was exactly, though in a less flagrant degree, the conduct of the King of France towards Edward himself, when he summoned him to attend before a court of French peers, and give satisfaction for a brawl which had taken place between a Gascon and a Norman vessel. It is no wonder, therefore, that Edward rather chose to

stifle the debate, by the surrender of the six forts in Guienne, than to fix the attention of the world upon the very different manner in which he judged of such treatment, when applied to himself, compared with that in which he chose to consider it, when used by him towards the King of Scotland.

It is also worthy of observation, that although the Scottish historians, in their zeal for their national antiquity, have pretended that a league existed between a Scottish king, whom they call Achaius, and the Emperor Charlemagne, as early as the year 779, and even affirm that the emperor bestowed upon the northern prince a tressure of fleurs-de-lis, as an augmentation of arms, it is yet easy to demonstrate that there were no armorial bearings till many centuries after Charlemagne, and that the intimate league between France and Scotland did not exist, until the circumstances of both countries recommended mutual support and good understanding betwixt them, as a matter alike politic and necessary. We shall hereafter see that the Scottish alliance was of considerably more importance to France, than that of France was to Scotland. It was certainly renewed during the reign of Philip the Fair.

To return to the general subject. Edward I was induced to trust to some future favourable opportunity the prosecution of his revenge against France, into which he did not think it politic, or find it possible, to lead a large army,

while embarrassed with the Scottish campaigns. In the month of August, 1297, however, it seemed to him that Scotland was so effectually pacified, as to permit a great effort for the chastisement of France. For this object, Edward trusted less to his own forces, though he transported to Flanders a gallant army of English, than to a general confederacy which he formed with several princes, on the same plan with the alliance so abruptly dissolved by Philip Augustus at the battle of Bouvines. The allies, too, were nearly the same persons, being the Emperor of Germany, the Dukes of Austria and Brabant, the Earl of Flanders, and other German and Flemish princes, who engaged, for considerable sums of money to be paid by the King of England, to assemble a combined army for the invasion of France.

Philip, who beheld himself threatened by a formidable confederacy, contrived to break up the alliance by the distribution of large sums among its members. Against Guy de la Dampierre alone, the aged Earl of Flanders, that king retained an embittered and vindictive spirit, and when the other princes had, in a great measure, been induced to abandon the confederacy by intrigues and gratuities, Philip moved against that prince with a predominant force. At the same time, he put in motion the numerous malecontents whom he had found in the great towns of Flanders, the inhabitants of which were extremely mutinous, and disposed to insurrection.

By the accumulated weight of foreign invasion and domestic insurrection, the earl was likely to be totally ruined, had not Edward of England moved to his assistance with a fleet and army and saved him from the revenge of France.

No battle of consequence, however, ensued. Edward was disgusted with the great expense which he had bestowed, to no purpose, upon his German confederates; and Philip, who had encountered more difficulties than he had expected in his campaign in Flanders, was also desirous of accommodation. A mutual friend to both monarchs offered his services as mediator. This was Charles, King of Sicily, called Charles the Lame. He was cousin-german to the King of France, being son of his uncle, Charles of Anjou. To Edward he was bound by an important obligation. Charles had been taken, as we have said, by Andrew Doria, in a naval engagement, in which the Arragon party were victorious. The victors manifested a strong inclination to put the captive prince to death, in their desire to revenge the execution of Conrade II by his father. But Edward, I who entertained a personal friendship for this prince, prevailed upon his captors to ransom him, and furnished the greater part of the money which was demanded upon the occasion. Thus was Charles the Lame well suited for a mediator between France and England, in which he made considerable progress, although the office was afterwards transferred to the reigning

Pope, whose feelings towards France were not of the most amicable character.

Boniface was at this time at the head of the Church, and he had, some considerable time before, entered into a quarrel with Philip the Fair, respecting various extravagant claims which the Pope had preferred over the French king and his territories. The particulars of this feud between the most Christian king and the Church, is too long and too confused to be entered into in this place; but it terminated in an unusual manner, considering how successful the Church had hitherto been in its most extravagant demands. The Pope was admitted as mediator, instead of the King of Sicily, and discharged his duty as umpire with considerable fairness. Notwithstanding which, the two kings took the wise resolution of settling their differences by a definitive treaty; because, from the grasping temper of Boniface, he was the object of suspicion to them both. Matters were accordingly brought to a settlement. Edward made his homage for Gascony (A.D. 1307), and France and England entered into a mutual alliance against any one who should disturb the one king or the other in their rights, franchises, and freedoms, by which agreement, the probability of a quarrel with their mediator the Pope was intimated.

Boniface resumed his attacks against Philip. He attempted to fix upon him a certain Bernard Laiseti, for whom, without the king's consent,

he had created a bishopric. He sent this man to Philip in the character of a legate, who, in requital, turned him out of his dominions. The Pope next convened a council at Rome, at which several of the French clergy attended. Matters were thus brought to extremity. In a word, Boniface had already made public his determination to excommunicate the King of France, and indeed the bull was ready prepared for that purpose. Among other extreme measures to avert this sentence, Philip sent into Italy two determined agents, who, having levied a strong body of partisans, seized upon the person of the Pope, then residing at his native town in Tuscany, insulted, even buffeted him, and had very near slain him, had not his Holiness, after two or three days' confinement, been rescued by a party of the people, and conveyed in safety to Rome. Here the disgrace which he had undergone had such an effect upon his spirits, that he died furiously mad, after having failed in extending the authority of the Church, in the way he meditated, and after having been obliged to submit to the encroachments, as he termed them, of the secular power. Thus died a Pontiff, of whom it is said, that he entered the church like a fox, ruled it like a lion, and died like a dog.

King Philip the Fair, after having been thus freed of his bitter opponent, Pope Boniface, took especial care to establish a close and powerful interest with the two succeeding popes, and endeavoured, indeed, by every means in his power,

to cultivate the favour of the papal see, and even to prevail on these supreme Pontiffs to shift their residence from Italy to France, in which he so far prevailed, as to induce them to reside at Avignon. In this manner did Philip obtain absolution from the sentence of excommunication pronounced by Boniface, and re-establish a friendly intercourse with the head of the Church.

This king was also engaged in a violent contest with the people of Flanders, which fief he was bent upon reuniting with the French empire. This was partly owing to his unabated hatred to his old vassal in that fief, Pierre de la Dampierre, whom he pressed so hard, that the count was under the necessity of submitting to his mercy.

But although the French gained great successes, and obtained possession of many towns in Flanders, they did not fail to drive the Flemings, as they had done the Sicilians, into rebellion against their new rulers, and great part of that populous nation, although at first favourable to the invaders, was soon in insurrection against them. Three sons of Count Pierre de la Dampierre put themselves at the head of the insurgents. They fought a great battle with the French, in which the Flemings were in the beginning successful. King Philip escaped with difficulty from the fury of the first attack, in which the enemy penetrated to his tent; but the fidelity of the French chivalry, who rallied at the

cry of the king being in danger, restored the battle, and the Flemings were finally defeated with prodigious slaughter. Notwithstanding the brilliancy of this victory, Philip was only disposed to regard it as a foundation for peace. The young princes of Flanders were still at the head of a numerous, though undisciplined army, and it might have been hazardous to drive to desperation so formidable an enemy. The eldest of the sons of Count Pierre was then admitted to do homage for the county of Flanders, and, on condition of paying a considerable sum, established his peace with the king.

In 1310, there occurred an important historical transaction, respecting which it is difficult to form a candid judgment. I have told you that there existed two great fraternities of military monks, both of which were formed in the Holy Land. The one had for its object the defence of the Temple; the other was associated as Knights Hospitallers, or Knights of St John; and both held out as their principal object the defence of Palestine against the infidels. Both these communities, but in a particular degree the Templars, fell under public obloquy, on account of the immense wealth which was acquired by the order, and the lax morals of individual members. To drink like a Templar, became a common phrase; and their public licentiousness, as well as the charges imputed to them of considering less the benefit of Christians in general, and the defence of Palestine and of Jerusalem,

than the aggrandizement of their own institution, were the general subjects of clamour against them. The association of the Temple, however, was destined to fall under darker and blacker accusations than affected the morals of individual knights, or the ambition of the order in general.

While these knights were the universal object of envy to the nobles, on account of their wealth, and odium to the poor, on account of their license, a singular incident brought their fate to a crisis. Two brethren of the order of the Temple had been condemned by their Grand Master, or President, to perpetual imprisonment. These criminals, desperate at this rigorous sentence, intimated, that, if released from imprisonment, they could disclose to the French government circumstances concerning their order of a mysterious and highly criminal nature. These men being examined accordingly, declared, before persons authorised to take their evidence, that the secret rules of the order of the Temple were entirely contrary to the Christian religion, as well as to decency and morality. This extraordinary accusation bore that the Templars commenced their initiation by the most blasphemous and disgusting professions, and by ceremonies so infamous in character, that human nature cannot readily allow the possibility of their being adopted by an association consisting of men of rank, engaged ostensibly in a religious fraternity. One hundred and forty knights were

arrested at once within the kingdom of France, and great part of them seem to have confessed charges similar to those averred by the knights who lodged the original accusation. To these confessions, considering when and how they were obtained, we can attach little credit, as we know that solitude and torture have made accused individuals confess (as in charges of witchcraft) things not only improbable, but altogether impossible.

But besides the above consideration, a very considerable number of those imprisoned Templars averred their innocence firmly. They said, that their confessing brethren had been seduced to their admissions by the promise of life and liberty; and they themselves denied strongly whatever charges were brought against them of an atrocious character. « We are but men,» they said, « and have our failings as such; but, to be guilty of the wickedness imputed to us, we must be incarnate fiends.»

The Pope himself held a council on this very dubious affair, in which the dissolution of the order was finally resolved upon all over Europe, although it was only in France that the Templars suffered condemnation and punishment. Fifty or sixty of them were put to death, maintaining their innocence with their last breath, and citing their persecutors to answer before God for the cruelties unjustly exercised upon them. Jaques de Molai, Grand Master of the order, with two of its other principal officers, were brought be-

fore the King of France and the Pope, and examined on the several points of the charge. At first, they admitted some part of the accusation against them, and denied others; upon which partial confession they were condemned to be burnt to death by a slow fire. When brought to execution, after retracting what they had formerly uttered, they declared, like the rest who were executed, that they had individually committed sins incident to mortals, but that their order had never been stained by any such iniquities as had been alleged against them.

Indeed, when we consider the whole of this extraordinary charge, and recollect that the Templars, as an order, were extremely rich, that they had fallen into public odium, and had shown themselves unequal to the defence of the Temple, for which purpose they were associated, it may be suspected that we see, in these circumstances alone, the grand causes of their destruction, and that the other gross accusations preferred against them, if not entirely false, were at least framed upon the crimes of some individuals only.

The procedure against this celebrated society added considerably to the odium with which the latter days of Philip the Fair were overclouded. His Flemish wars had exhausted his revenues, and vexed his people with extraordinary impositions. His dissensions with Pope Boniface, the violence which he authorized towards that Pope, above all the exactions which he made

upon the clergy, caused him to be held in horror by all strict Catholics. The ruin of the Templars was imputed to his avarice and injustice. While he was thus loaded with unpopularity from different causes, a domestic affront seems to have affected him deeply.

Philip's three sons were all married to princesses of suitable birth; but the morals of the whole were so doubtful, that each of the three princes accused his wife of adultery. Joan, wife of Philip, Count of Poitou, the second of the royal brethren, was the only one of the three princesses acquitted of the charge. Margaret, wife of Louis the eldest, and Blanche, wedded to the youngest, of the sons of Philip, were found guilty, and condemned to perpetual confinement in the fortress of Chastel Gaillard. Two knights, the partners of their crimes, were put to death with horrible tortures.

This shameful incident, and the disgrace which attended it, sunk deep into the heart of Philip the Fair. The king, at the same time, saw that the public dissatisfaction would render it difficult, or impossible, to raise funds for reviving the war in Flanders, upon which he was determined, assigning for a reason, that he had never received the money which the young count engaged to pay on the conclusion of the former peace. The count, on the contrary, alleged he had paid the subsidies regularly to the king's favourite courtier, named Enguerraud de Marrigny. The terrors, therefore, of a war for which

no funds could be provided, and which was particularly unpopular in France, added to the king's embarrassment. His spirit sunk beneath such a load of evils and disgrace; he took to bed without any formal complaint, and died of the cruel disease which carried off some of his predecessors, viz. a deep melancholy. On his deathbed, the dying monarch expressed great apprehension lest the imposts which he had laid upon his people should be the cause of his suffering punishment in the next world, and conjured his children to diminish or discharge them—a late act of penitence, to which much credit is not rashly to be given.

Philip the Fair left behind three sons, Louis, Philip, and Charles, each of whom mounted the throne in their turn, but all died without issue. Of two daughters of the same king, one died unmarried, the other, Isabel, was wedded to Edward, Prince of Wales, son to Edward I, who afterwards reigned as Edward II. It was upon the extinction of the male heirs of Philip the Fair, that the kings of England laid claim to the inheritance of France, in contradiction to the Salic law, and in right of this same Isabel's succession to her father.

Louis X, whom, for some uncertain reason, the French called Hutin (or the Mutinous), next ascended the throne. The first point he had to consider was the bringing to account the favourite of the deceased monarch, Enguerraud de Marrigny, who had been the agent of Philip's ex-

actions, and was supposed to have peculated enormously, as the money passed through his hands. Called before the princes of the blood, and closely interrogated by the brother of the late king, Charles Count of Valois, in particular, who, in fact, governed in the name of his nephew, the accused party answered with great insolence.

« Where, » said the Count de Valois, « are the treasures of the late king? »

« You shall have a good account of them, » answered the prisoner, haughtily.

« Give it me, then, on the spot, » answered the prince.

« Since you press me to speak, » replied Marrigny, « I have given you one half of the treasure of the late king, your brother, and, with the other half, I have paid his majesty's debts. »

« You lie, » replied the prince, in a rage.

« You lie, yourself, » replied Marrigny.

In consequence of this intemperate and insulting conduct, the fallen favourite was arrested, thrown into prison, and brought to trial, when he was charged with embezzlement of the royal revenue, and with the abuse of his late master's favour. The new king was present at this trial, and looked on the accused with more compassion than his uncle and brothers showed towards him. As the princes of the blood perceived the king's intention to screen Marrigny, at least from a capital sentence, they mixed up with the other crimes of which he was accused, a

charge that his wife had trafficked with a sorcerer, and an old woman, deemed a witch, for the purpose of making waxen images resembling the king and princes, which, being dissolved at a slow fire, the strength and substance of those they represented were expected to decay in proportion. The king, believing in a practice which was at that time an object of general credulity, was startled at the accusation, gave up Marrigny to the vengeance of his uncle the Count de Valois, and the unfortunate favourite was hanged accordingly. The sorcerer and the witch were also put to death, and the wife of Marrigny was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. It was much doubted whether the crimes of Marrigny deserved quite so severe a fate; and it is certain that the aggravation which induced the king to consent to his death, was entirely visionary. Charles, Count of Valois, himself repented of the persevering cruelty with which he had pressed the conviction of this person; and when he was struck with a fit of the palsy, imputed the infliction to the vengeance of Heaven for Marrigny's death. On his deathbed, he bequeathed considerable sums to purchase the prayers of the church for the pardon of Marrigny's sins, as well as his own.

In the meantime, Louis Hutin arranged a marriage for himself with Clementia, or Clemence, daughter of Charles Martel, King of Hungary, whom he selected, to replace the criminal and unfortunate Margaret, imprisoned in Chastel

Gaillard, as we have already seen. The existence of this last unfortunate lady was, however, still an obstacle to her husband's contracting a second union. Louis Hutin removed it by an act of violence. The unfortunate Margaret was strangled with the sheets of her bed, that her husband might be at liberty to wed Clemence of Hungary (A. D. 1315), a match which took place immediately on her execution, or murder—for so a vengeance so long deferred, might be most justly termed. The king and queen were crowned at Rheims, when it was with difficulty that, by the assistance of the wealth found in the coffers of Marrigny, and confiscated to the state, the necessary expenses of the coronation were defrayed.

The new-married couple had not passed many months together, when they were disturbed by the voice of war. The same Count Robert of Flanders, who had been so troublesome to Philip the Fair, was still in insurrection, and it was necessary to go to war with him, although the public finances were in bad order, and totally inadequate to the services of the state. The king also felt all those inconveniences which crowd upon a sovereign when his exchequer is exhausted. When he demanded supplies, his subjects took the opportunity of insisting upon their privileges, real and pretended. The young king was much embarrassed, but he was not destined long to remain so. He died in 1316, the year after his marriage, and the first of his reign.

The fate of the kingdom remained suspended until time should show whether a son or a daughter should be the produce of the confinement of Clementia, his queen, which event was expected in four months after the death of Louis.

Philip of Poitou, the second brother of the deceased monarch, was unquestionably entitled to be declared regent, being, in fact, the next heir to the crown, if the queen should not be delivered of a surviving son. Nevertheless, Charles of Valois, uncle to Louis Hutin, made an attempt to supersede his nephew, but the Parliament adjudged the regency to Philip, who came speedily to Paris, and assumed the office of guardian of the young prince and regent of the kingdom, while awaiting the event of the queen's confinement.

This took place November 14, 1316, when Clemence was delivered of a boy, who did not survive above eight days, injured as was thought, by the excess of his mother's sorrow for the husband of whom she had been so suddenly and prematurely deprived.

Philip, the brother of Louis Hutin, therefore, was transformed from regent into king, and was consecrated the twelfth day after his nephew's death. It was not, however, without opposition, of which it is necessary to explain the cause, as it concerns a remarkable point of French history.

You cannot have forgotten that the tribes, of

which the Frank, or French nation, consisted, had their principal territories upon the Rhine and the Saale. From the latter tribe, comes the term of the Salic law, an enactment current among the early tribes who dwelt on that river. However extensive in its original sense, the Salic law has long denoted that rule of inheritance which excludes a female, or any other person whose connexion with the blood royal cannot be traced without the intervention of a female link, from the possibility of succeeding to the crown of France, in any case. This law is understood to have applied to the Merovingian and Carlovingian, and Capetian dynasties. The dignity of king, said the French jurists, with all the assumption of masculine arrogance, was of too much dignity to pass either to, by, or through, the distaff. The exclusion, whether reasonable or otherwise, was strictly observed in the early ages of the monarchy.

From the accession of Hugo Capet, in 987, to the death of the infant and posthumous son of Louis Hutin, in 1316, the crown had regularly descended from father to son; thirteen generations having successively possessed it during the space of three hundred and twenty-nine years, without a single instance of collateral succession. The Salic law, therefore, had, during this long period, remained, as it is termed, in abeyance, there having occurred no opportunity of putting it in force. It seems, therefore, to have been partly forgotten, since the Duke of Burgundy,

and the Count of Valois, with a considerable party, were disposed to dispute the claim which Philip V, called, from his stature, the Long, made to the crown. These princes contended, that, since the late king, Louis Hutin, had left behind him a daughter, Joan, she must be considered as the heir of her short-lived brother; an axiom which, if allowed, closed the succession against Philip the Long.

This important matter was referred to the States-General, who, having maturely considered so important a question, finally decreed, that the Salic law and custom, inviolably observed in the French nation, excluded females from the throne; and the right of Philip was universally acknowledged accordingly, in preference to that of the Princess Joan. The new sovereign extended his influence among the nobility, by bestowing among them, in marriage, four daughters, to whom he gave considerable appanages, and thereby attached them to his interest. One of the persons whose friendship he acquired in this manner, was Louis of Flanders, whose family had given so much trouble to Philip the Fair, and had threatened the short reign of Louis Hutin. This might be accounted a considerable stroke of state policy, as the young Louis was next heir to the reigning count, his grandfather, who was an aged man. Philip the Long also renewed the league with Scotland, and transacted his affairs upon equal terms with Edward II of England, who was his brother-in-law.

But, though prudent and politic upon the whole, King Philip the Long, in one particular, gave great dissatisfaction to his people, viz. in the eagerness which he showed to collect large sums of revenue, and his haste to restore the obnoxious impost which had been discontinued by his predecessor. It must be allowed that this was neither from a disposition to extravagance nor to avarice, either of which it might be supposed to have indicated. But, like his great ancestor, Saint Louis, Philip the Long unhappily conceived himself bound to undertake a crusade so soon as ever opportunity should permit; and it was with this view that he made a great collection of treasure, in the hope of removing some of the obstacles which had proved so fatal to his ancestors, who meditated the same project.

A wild inclination towards these perilous expeditions seemed at this time to pervade all Europe. The common people of France, in particular, were stirred up by ignorant friars and enthusiasts, who pretended to have discovered by inspiration that it was the divine will to rescue Palestine from the infidels, not by means of the great and powerful of the world, but by shepherds and peasants. This doctrine becoming general, bands of the most low and ignorant persons enrolled themselves under various leaders, and traversed the country under the name of Pastoraux. They were not long thus embodied without discovering there was business to do in

behalf of Christianity, without going so far as the Holy Land.

The Jews, who had been persecuted and banished from France by Philip the Fair, and restored by his successor, as necessary to the existence of the state, once again became the objects of popular hatred, not only on account of their religion, and because their wealth rendered them the ready objects of plunder, but also from a new accusation, which so ignorant an age alone would have listened to. A pestilential or epidemic disease was at this time scourging France, where bad living and dearth of provisions rendered such infectious disorders very fatal. To account for the present pestilence, it was said that the Jews had accepted a bribe from the Mahometan princes, and had undertaken to poison all wells, fountains, and rivers. The charge of participation in this crime was extended to a set of unfortunate wretches, who were rather the objects of disgust than of compassion. Those afflicted with the leprosy, who were obliged to live in hospitals apart from the rest of mankind, were stated to have joined with the Jews in the iniquitous project of poisoning the waters of the kingdom. It was an accusation easily understood, and greedily swallowed, by the vulgar The populace, of course, being already in arms, turned them against the Jews and the lepers, considering both as a species of wretched outcasts, whose sufferings ought to interest no healthy Christian. Without any formality, or

trial, or otherwise, these ignorant fanatics seized upon great numbers both of the Jews and of the lepers, and tore them to pieces, or burnt them alive without scruple.

The Jews, though of late years they may be considered as an unwarlike people, have always been remarkable for the obstinacy of their temper, and for their opposing to popular fury a power of endurance which has often struck even their oppressors with horror. Five hundred of these men, upon the present occasion, defended a castle into which they had thrown themselves, with stones, arrows, javelins, and other missiles, till, having no other weapons left, they launched the persons of their living children from the walls on the heads of their assailants, and finally put each other to the sword, rather than die by the hands of the multitude.

At Vitri, also, fifty Jews distinguished themselves by a similar act of horrible despair. They chose with composure two of their number, a young woman and an old man, who received the charge to put the rest of their company to death. Those intrusted with the execution of this fearful duty, executed their instructions without dispute or resistance on the part of the sufferers. When the others were all slain, the old man next received his death at the hand of the female, and to close the tragedy, this last either fell or threw herself from the walls of the place; but having broken her thigh-bone in the fall, she was

plunged by the besiegers alive into the fire which consumed the dead bodies.

The king himself was obliged to submit to the popular prejudice. He once more banished the Jews, and by a proclamation confined the lepers to their respective hospitals, under the penalty of being burnt alive. The royal troops were next employed with success in putting down the Pastoraux, and other tumultuous assemblies of fanatical banditti, and restoring the peace of the kingdom.

Shortly after, King Philip the Long died, after a reign of five years, in 1321. As was frequently the case on the demise of great persons in that age, his death was strongly suspected of being caused by poison. He was, upon the whole, a well-meaning king; and the love of money which he had at first testified, was atoned for by an edict, near the close of his reign, dispensing with the imposts upon the people, and by a meritorious attempt to reduce the coins, and the weights and measures, throughout all France, to some uniform standard, a matter of great importance to commercial intercourse.

Philip the Long was succeeded (A. D. 1321) by his brother, Charles the Fair; the Salic law having its full force in his behalf as heir-male, and his right being admitted, to the exclusion of the daughters of the deceased Philip the Long, and in particular, the Duchess of Burgundy, who was the eldest of these princesses. Charles the

Fair, being thus placed on the throne, became desirous to get rid of his wife Blanche, who remained still a prisoner, on account of her infidelity.

He did not on this occasion proceed to the extremities adopted by his eldest brother, Louis Hutin, who, in similar circumstances, had the frail and unfortunate Margaret strangled, but contented himself with obtaining a sentence of divorce from Rome, upon the old pretence that Blanche and he were related within the forbidden degrees. The supposed connexion was even more flimsy than usual, being only of a spiritual nature, the mother of Blanche having, it seems, been godmother to the king. It was better, however, to be divorced as the daughter of her husband's godmother, than to be strangled with a pair of sheets. The discarded princess covered her disgrace by taking the veil in the Abbey of Maubuisson.

In room of this lady, Charles espoused Margaret, daughter of Henry of Luxembourg, seventh Emperor of Germany of that name. But no good fortune attended the marriages of this race; Queen Margaret was killed by the overturn of her chariot, an accident which proved fatal to her and to an unborn male infant.

As his third wife, Charles the Fair married with dispensation a cousin of his own, who survived him many years, but produced no family save daughters.

Charles the Fair began his reign by two remarkable punishments. Among the other chiefs of independent armed companies who were the pest of France, one Jourdain de Lisle was brought to his deserved sentence, and capitally executed, although a nephew of the reigning Pope. Besides having committed murder, and rapine of every description, not even sparing the churches, he had put to death a pursuivant of the king, having the royal arms about his neck, which was considered as an act of high-treason. He dashed out the brains of this man with his own mace, for daring to serve a royal writ upon him. All intercession was in vain employed for so notorious a miscreant, who incurred his deserved fate upon the gibbet. The prosecution against Gerard de la Guette was of a more ordinary character. He had been a low-born officer of finance, raised to the dignity of treasurer by Philip the Long, and, as usual, stood accused of having failed to render to the new king a fair account of the sums intrusted to him by the old one. He was arrested, but escaped the fate of Marrigny by dying in prison.

The affairs of England, which now became rather perplexed, next attracted Charles's anxious attention. There had been for a long time a friendly understanding betwixt the courts of England and France; but in 1322, some disturbances occurred in Guienne, which made Charles the Fair in more peremptory terms than usual demand that the King of England should appear

and render homage for the possessions he still occupied in France.

This was an inconvenient summons to Edward II, a weak and unfortunate prince, who, having been completely defeated by the Scottish, had, moreover, been much thwarted by the English barons, who put to death Gaveston, his favourite, and had reduced the king himself to a very low ebb. Latterly, having been successful against the insurgent barons, the king had selected for his minion Hugh Spencer, an ambitious and profligate young man, who now ruled the king with absolute sway. Isabella, the queen of Edward II, was, as a French princess, and sister of the reigning monarch of that country, judged the fittest agent to represent Edward at the court of France; since her husband himself was afraid to visit that kingdom, and his favourite Spencer was still more unwilling that his master should take such a journey. It is said, besides, that Edward, who did not love his wife, was desirous to be rid of the restraint on his pleasures imposed by her presence in England. But he and his advisers failed to observe, that Isabella, finding herself excluded from her husband's affections, had contracted a contempt for him which amounted to hatred. There is also too much reason to believe that the same exasperated princess had already become attached criminally to Roger Mortimer, afterwards well known as her paramour. He had escaped from the Tower of London some time before; and, as he was now

residing in France, it was imprudent, to say the least, to send the queen, where their correspondence might be easily renewed or continued.

Edward, however, looking no farther than his immediate convenience, permitted, or rather enjoined, his wife to go to France, to negotiate between her brother and her husband. But the personal presence of Edward himself was still required by the King of France, as a condition of the restoration of Guienne. Again Isabella interposed her mediation, and procured the consent of the French king, that if Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward III, would perform the homage, investiture of those territories should be granted to him, without demanding his father's personal presence. This was regularly transacted in the course of a few days. But the unfortunate Edward II was not aware that his queen had only gone abroad with the purpose of returning at the head of an army, by which he was afterwards dethroned, imprisoned, and murdered.

Isabella had already commenced her intrigues to that effect, which did not escape the notice of the French court. It does not indeed appear that Charles the Fair connived at the conspiracy of his sister against her husband, though it is alleged that she received the advice of Robert of Artois, by which she left the court of Paris for that of Hainault, where she arranged a marriage for her son with Philippa, the daughter of the

count, and obtained the military supplies with which she afterwards invaded England.

Charles the Fair was now beginning to feel the same infirm health which had carried off his brethren. He finally died at Bois de Vincennes, and the descendants of Hugo Capet were extinct in the first line by the death (A. D. 1327) of the last male heir of Philip the Fair. It was remarked, that at the death of the last-named prince, there existed three sons at man's estate, so that, according to all human prospects, the succession to the crown seemed amply provided for; yet it pleased God in so short a space as fourteen years that they should all be carried off by death, without any of them leaving male issue. The only chance of an heir-male of this branch coming into existence, was, that the Queen-dowager Joanna, third wife of Charles the Fair, might perhaps be delivered of a son. Her orphan, however, proved to be a daughter, which, opening the succession to Philip of Valois, the next heir-male of the House of Capet, gave rise to the conflicting claims of the Kings of England and France, and to the dreadful war which ravaged the two kingdoms, but especially that of France.

CHAPTER III.

Homage paid by Edward III to Philip of France in the Cathedral of Amiens—Edward subdues Scotland, and resolves to assert his Claim (in right of his Mother) to the Crown of France, to which course he is incited by Robert of Artois, the exiled Minister of Philip—Edward obtains the Consent of his Parliament for an Invasion of France, and sets sail—Naval Engagement at the entrance of the Harbour of Sluyse, in which the English are victorious—Siege of St Omers—the Besiegers dispersed by a Sally of the Defenders—Siege of Tournay—a Truce for One Year concluded, and Edward returns to England—Prolongation of the Truce—Dispute concerning the Succession to the Dukedom of Bretagne—The French King espouses the part of Charles of Blois, who had been dispossessed of the Duchy by John de Montfort—De Montfort taken, and imprisoned—the masculine Courage of his Countess—she holds out Hennebon against Charles of Blois and his French Auxiliaries—English Succours, under Sir Walter Manny, thrown into the Town, by whose Gallantry the Siege is raised—Prosecution of the War—Hennebon again besieged, and the Siege again raised—a Truce concluded—Renewal of the War—Edward himself takes the field, and is opposed by John, the Son of Philip—Truce concluded—A new Rupture between the Kings of France and England—Campaign under the Earl of Derby—Siege of Auberoche raised by the Gallantry of Sir Walter Manny—Military Tactics at this period—Feudal Chivalry—Free Companions—English Bows and Bills—Italian Crossbowmen—French Infantry—Mercenaries.

ALTHOUGH the states of France had formally re-

cognised the accession of King Philip, yet Edward III, the young King of England, was far from acquiescing in a decision which had the effect of depriving him of a succession, which, in every other kingdom but France, would have made him unquestioned heir to his maternal uncle, Charles the Fair.

Edward was young, brave, ambitious, full of talent, and at the head of a mighty nation. Yet, even in early youth, he was capable of listening to prudent counsel; and, sensible that considering the revolutions which England had lately undergone,—considering his own bondage, as it might be termed, under the guardianship of his mother and her favourite, Mortimer,—considering also, the unanimity of France under the present king, this was not a time to propose a claim so important, and which must be followed by inevitable war. His decision was hurried by a summons from the King of France, that he should appear and do homage for the dukedom of Aquitaine, the denial of which requisition must have instantly been followed by a declaration of forfeiture, which Edward was as yet in no condition to dispute. He therefore resolved to submit to the summons for the present. But to avoid the inference, that, by rendering this homage for his French possessions, he acknowledged the right of Philip of Valois as King of France, king Edward, in his own secret council, entered a solemn protest, that such homage as he should at this time pay to Philip, should not

prejudice his own hereditary right to the kingdom of France, in virtue of his mother, Isabella. Under this private protestation, Edward went to France with a noble train of knights and peers, where Philip met him with an attendance and retinue suited to the occasion, to receive the homage which the other came to pay. It may be well supposed, that every ceremony applicable to the rendering of such fealty, was nicely disputed between such august personages. The meeting of the sovereigns was in the cathedral of Amiens. The English king appeared clad in a robe of crimson velvet, embroidered with leopards of gold. He wore a royal crown on his head, was girt with his sword, and had his golden spurs buckled upon his heels. The King of France received him, seated in a chair, before which a cushion was laid for the King of England to kneel upon. As he refused that act of humiliation, the Grand Chamberlain of France insisted, not only that that posture should be adopted, but that the King of England should lay aside the regal ornaments, and that the homage should be rendered by him kneeling, bare-headed, without sword and girdle, and without spurs. Edward was extremely angry at being compelled to divest himself, in such an assembly, of the usual marks of his rank. He was, however, obliged to do so; and it is probable his hatred to Philip of Valois was greatly increased by his being subjected to this public affront.

This unpleasing ceremony being performed,

and the English possessions in France so far secured, Edward returned to England, where he dispossessed his mother and her lover, Mortimer, of the administration, and took the command of the kingdom into his own hand.

This revolution effected, the young king, perceiving Scotland deprived by death of her heroic deliverer, Robert Bruce, and of his great captains, Randolph, Douglas, and others, thought the time opportune for renewing his grandfather's and father's attempts upon the liberty of that nation. With this purpose, he invaded that country—first, by means of the Disinherited Barons, as the English lords were called (lords, that is, who had lost estates in Scotland, granted to them by Edward I and II), and afterwards by his own royal armies—and soon reduced the Scottish to nearly the same state of reluctant subjection which they experienced in the time of his grandfather Edward I.

As, however, the natives of the north continued to show the same indomitable opposition to the English yoke; as the young king and queen of that nation had found refuge in France, when there was no corner of safety left for them in their own country; as French money, and even French troops, were sent at different times to keep up the spirit of the Scottish insurgents, Edward, now in nearly complete possession of the island of Britain, began to meditate the assertion of his own claim of inheritance upon France, that he might so put an end at once, and for ever, to

the troublesome interference of that powerful nation in his Scottish wars.

To this resolution the King of England was urged by the counsels of a hot-tempered and disappointed man, who fled about this time from the court of France to that of England. This was no other than Robert, Count of Artois, a high prince of the blood, and an especial councillor, till this period, of Philip of Valois. This nobleman was grandson to a Robert Count of Artois, slain at the battle of Courtray, after having had a son, named Philip, who died before him. The slaughtered count left a daughter named Matilda, besides this Robert of Artois, son of Philip, who was entitled, as male heir, to the succession of his grandfather. But Matilda, the daughter of the elder Count Robert, being married to Otho of Burgundy, and two daughters whom she had by that marriage, being married to two sons of Philip the Fair, that king of France adjudged the county of Artois to the heir-female, which was confirmed by a judgment of Philip the Long. In this decision the Salic Law was set aside, it being alleged that the peculiar customs of inheritance, observed from time immemorial in Artois, did not permit its application.

By these judgments, Robert of Artois, the grandson, conceived himself highly injured, and began to employ his political sagacity in the way which he thought most likely to favour his own interest in the county of Artois. In the debate concerning the succession, upon the death of

Charles the Fair, Robert of Artois declared zealously for the party of Philip of Valois, both because Philip's right, being that of an heir-male, favoured his own claim upon the county of Artois, and because he was himself brother-in-law and friend of the claimant.

Philip, who was greatly indebted to this prince for smoothing his access to the crown, by his important services and eloquent representations, received him into his highest favour, presented him with the earldom of Beaumont le Roger, and consulted him in almost all important business which he had to transact, until Robert, thus distinguished, began to think the period was favourable for again trying the question respecting the succession of his grandfather, no longer indeed with his aunt Matilda, who was dead, but with her successors. After obtaining, therefore, many marks of the king's favour and confidence, he was so secure of his interest, as to propose to Philip of Valois, to review and alter the decisions of his predecessors, Philip the Fair and Philip the Long, which took from Robert the county of Artois. The king eluded his minister's request, by replying, that he had no power to disturb the decisions of his predecessors, and that Robert ought to remain satisfied with such possessions as he had obtained from the kindness of the king. This refusal drove D'Artois to still more unlawful expedients, to obtain the end on which he had determined. He forged, or caused to be forged, a testament of

his grandfather, settling the county of Artois in his favour, and produced it to the king, as a document affording sufficient room for reviewing and recalling the judgments of which he complained. Philip of Valois, looking upon the deed produced, of which he instantly recognised the falsehood, sternly exhorted his minister to desist from a pursuit so unjust, and to beware how he prejudiced his own honour, and insulted his sovereign, by claiming faith for forged deeds. Robert of Artois replied with fury, that he would support the truth of the testament with his lance in the lists, against whosoever impugned it. The king, highly offended at a defiance in which he thought his own person was included, answered sternly, « I will impugn it, and will know how to punish the fabricator. »

The king and his minister parted in great displeasure on both sides, and Robert of Artois was heard to drop these dangerous words:—« He who placed the crown upon Philip's head, knows how to deprive him of it again. »

This imprudent speech being reported to Philip, he published a sentence against his late minister, condemning him for forgery; declaring him fallen from his honours, banishing him from France, and pronouncing his property confiscated. At the same time, a female of the house of Betune was burnt alive, as the actual forger of the testament in question, and as guilty also of sorcery. By this usage, in which, perhaps, the king, in forgetting former services, followed the

dictates of offended dignity farther than prudence would have counselled, Robert of Artois was driven to despair. Philip's displeasure even extended to the exile's wife, whom he imprisoned, although she was his own sister; and he showed similar rancour, by interfering to prevent Robert from finding refuge in Brabant, where his friends were prohibited from protecting him, under pain of the King of France's vengeance. This inflexible severity drove the exiled statesman to seek refuge with Edward, who was Philip's most formidable enemy, both from situation, and recollection of the scene of homage which he had been constrained to perform at Amiens.

In the year 1337, Robert of Artois fled to England in disguise, and being a near relation of Edward, received there welcome and protection; and, from his character for policy, speedily found the road to the king's ear. He employed his influence, which soon became great, to persuade Edward of the practicability of asserting his title to the crown of France in right of his mother. Edward, flattered by the prospects displayed by so sagacious a counsellor, resolved upon a war with France, founded on the sweeping and general assertion, that he himself was the lawful heir of that kingdom, in despite of the Salic law on which Philip reposed his right.

Availing himself of the wealth which his subjects readily put at their king's command, in a point where their sense of national glory was so

strongly interested, Edward commenced, at very great expense, to form a confederacy with the Emperor, Louis of Bavaria, the Dukes of Brabant and Guelders, the Archbishop of Cologne, and other petty princes of the Low Country, for the formation of an army which should support the title which he intended to assume as King of France. For the levying and keeping on foot this army, he engaged to pay large subsidies to the princes of the confederacy.

Edward III, however, experienced what has been since often felt, that it is easier for England, by her wealth, to induce continental powers to take up arms in her behalf, than to inspire them with vigour and spirit in an enterprise, to which money alone had induced them to accede. Philip took the field, with an army of one hundred thousand men, to face this gathering storm, but cautiously avoided a combat, in which a defeat might have cost him his throne; and the allied princes trimmed, shuffled, procrastinated, and delayed assembling their forces, till the summer passed away without any remarkable event. In the spring, 1340, Edward returned to hold his parliament, which was called chiefly for the purpose of requiring new subsidies from his subjects, having exhausted those formerly granted among his allies to little purpose. His parliament were, however, complaisant; and, having settled his affairs at home, the king resolved to return to the continent, although the French fleet, amounting to four hundred sail,

with forty thousand men on board, who had been already troublesome to the English coasts and commerce, was prepared, by their master's order, to intercept Edward upon the sea.

These vessels were hired from the republic of Genoa, and manned with mariners from that state. On 22d June, 1340, the King of England set sail with two hundred and sixty vessels, well manned with archers and men-at-arms. Other vessels conveyed English ladies and gentlewomen, who went over to pay their respects to the queen, whom Edward had left behind him in Flanders as a pledge of his return. When the English approached the harbour of Sluyse, which they had fixed for disembarkation, they beheld it occupied by so many vessels, that their masts and streamers seemed like a great wood. The king demanded of the master of his vessel, «what he conceived this navy to be.»— «They are,» answered the master, «ships fitted out by the French king to despoil your Majesty's coasts, and interrupt your commerce. They have already done you, in this way, much harm; and now, if they may, it is their object to take your person.»—«Ha!» said the king, «I have long desired to meet them, and now I will make them dearly abye the displeasures they have done me.» Acting as admiral in person, the king commanded his fleet to cast anchor for the night.

On the next morning, having arranged the vessels bearing the ladies at such a distance that

they might see the conflict without danger, Edward, with his ships of war, held a course in moving towards the fight which was calculated to gain the wind of the enemy, in which manœuvre he succeeded. This conduct also seemed to the French to evince timidity on the part of Edward, and induced them to leave the harbour to attack the English fleet,—another object which the King of England had in view. The battle commenced at ten in the morning, and lasted nine long hours, during which the Genoese sailors, by whom the French ships were manned, plied the English with their cross-bows, to which the English replied with the long-bow, a much more effective weapon, and which had been a favourite in England ever since the Norman Conquest. When the missiles on each side were expended, the ships approached close to each other, and grappled or secured themselves to their opponents by means of iron chains or hooks, by which the contending vessels were held together. The men-at-arms on both sides thus fought on the decks hand to hand, with their swords and axes, as if on shore. The English, animated by the presence and example of Edward, obtained at length, after a bloody battle, a most complete victory, the first distinguished naval success of England, which has since gained so many. In consequence of which, the whole French navy being taken, dispersed, or destroyed, King Edward achieved his landing with all glory and victory; and the splendour of

his conquest induced his allies to show an activity which they had not yet manifested. The king, in conjunction with them, formed the siege of Tournay, a strong town, which was valiantly defended by the assistance of a French garrison.

At this time the country of Flanders was divided betwixt two factions. The earl of that country adhered faithfully to King Philip, whose vassal he was, and was followed by the nobles and gentry. But the towns of Flanders were at all times inhabited by a mutinous body of citizens, manufacturers, and the like, who were not disposed to submit to the earl or his nobility, and were often engaged in actual rebellion against him, and in insurrection against his dependent nobles. A brewer, of the name of D'Arteville, had raised himself to the rank of a principal demagogue among these artisans, and, holding a close intercourse with Edward III, was of course hostile to the French party, which had been embraced by the earl.

An army of these insurgent Flemings, amounting in number to forty thousand men, with the auxiliary aid of five thousand English archers, took the field under Robert of Artois, who, acting as the commander of this second and somewhat tumultuary army, laid siege to Saint Omers, while the more regular part of the allied troops besieged Tournay. Saint Omers, however, was well defended; and in an attack upon the suburbs of the place, the besieged made a strong

sally upon the Flemings while in disorder, slew about three or four thousand men, and impressed upon the rest a panic terror, which manifested itself in an extraordinary way that very night. About midnight, there fell upon the undisciplined besiegers a strange consternation, and groundless fear, which impelled them to cut down their tents and pavilions, and fly from before the place. Their leaders in vain endeavoured to argue with them, asking, « Why they fled? whom they feared?» and such like questions, to which the F emings made no answer, but dispersed themselves in confusion, never again to be assembled as an army.

One part of King Edward's plan for the campaign was thus frustrated by a singular accident; nor was the siege at Tournay more successful, though it was more regularly conducted, and more honourably raised, than that of Saint Omers. King Edward maintained the siege of the former place for nine weeks and upwards, still hoping that he might be able to compel Philip, who lay with a royal army within three or four leagues of the place, to hazard a battle for its relief.

In this, however, he failed. In consequence of which disappointment, and scarcely knowing in what way to bring the war to a decision, Edward despatched a personal challenge, defying King Philip to let the controversy be decided either by the kings themselves in single fight, or by a hundred champions on each side. Philip had too much wisdom to accept of this defiance.

He returned for answer that a king accepted not a challenge from a vassal, and upbraided Edward with being perjured after the oath which he had taken when he paid him homage at Amiens.

The German and Dutch confederates of England were again becoming weary of the war, which was marked by so little good fortune; and, what may be considered as a simultaneous occurrence, Edward's power of continuing the subsidies to these venal allies was gradually diminishing.

When matters were in this critical posture before Tournay, the Pope and his Cardinals urged strongly the necessity of peace betwixt the two Christian monarchs, the most powerful in Europe, in order that they might engage in a joint effort against the infidels. This gave an apology, at least, to Edward's pride, for entering into terms. Robert, King of Sicily, was equally anxious in the same cause of mediation; but especially the Lady Jane of Valois, Countess Dowager of Hainault, mother-in-law to the King of England, and sister to Philip of France, did her utmost, by affectionate remonstrances and judicious arguments, to prevail upon the contending monarchs to negotiate for a truce. This was concluded in September, 1340, to continue for one year, and affording, it was supposed, sufficient leisure for adjusting a definitive peace.

Edward returned to England in very bad hu-

mour, deserted by his mercenary confederates, and convinced that he himself was mistaken in supposing he could conquer France by the aid of princes, who, one by one (the emperor himself not excepted), made peace with his enemy when the treasures of England failed. On the other hand, notwithstanding his loss in the great sea action, Philip of France carried away all the advantages of the campaign. He had saved Tournay from ruin, and obliged the King of England, who had threatened to dethrone him, to retreat from his dominions, without having been able to gain so much as a single village of France, and was therefore, undoubtedly, in every sense, possessed of the effective fruits of victory.

The truce, of course, terminated the war for the present; but still the ground of mortal quarrel remained betwixt the two countries, rankled deep in each, and afforded a ready pretence for either nation, when they should again chuse to take up arms. Neither could a more solid peace between the crowns be now achieved, although Edward required nothing more than a release for the payment of homage for Gascony; a condition greatly short of his original high pretensions. The truce, therefore, was prolonged for another year, as the only way of avoiding the revival of a war which endangered Christendom. Thus stood matters, when an unexpected event took place, which revived Edward's hopes of obtaining possession of the crown of France,

much abated as they had been by the event of the late unsatisfactory campaigns. This was a dispute concerning the succession of the Duke of Bretagne, which originated as follows.

Arthur, the second duke, had, by his first wife, three sons, John, Guy, and Peter; by his second wife he left one son, named John de Montfort, being the title of his mother's family. At his death, Duke Arthur was succeeded by his eldest son, John III. This prince died 30th April, 1341, without issue; Guy, the second son of Duke Arthur, had been dead about ten years before, leaving one daughter, Jane, who, by desire of her uncle, was married to Charles de Blois, nephew to the King of France. During Duke Arthur's lifetime and reign, Peter, the third son of that prince, had died young and childless, while the aforesaid John de Montfort, son of Arthur, by his second wife, was still alive. Thus standing the succession, Duke John III had prevailed upon the States of Bretagne to recognise the right of his niece, Jane, and her husband, Charles de Blois, as his presumptive heir and successor in the duchy, in preference to John de Montfort, who was unquestionably the heir-male, and had, as such, a considerable party among the Bretons. This expression of the duke's will met no direct opposition. But, upon the death of Duke John, the Earl de Montfort determined to dispute the destination in which he had hitherto acquiesced. He entered into a close correspondence with Edward III,

and easily prevailed upon him to forward his pretensions to the dukedom of Bretagne, agreeing, at the same time, to assert those of Edward to the kingdom of France. De Montfort seized on the treasure of the deceased duke, gained possession of Nantes, and several other towns of Bretagne, and made every effort to support his claim. To draw his connexion with England still closer, he visited that country, made a formal alliance with its sovereign, and did homage to Edward as King of France, for the dukedom of Bretagne.

These proceedings gave great and natural offence to the King of France, who, upon the complaint of Charles of Blois, summoned De Montfort to appear before his Parliament of Paris. The earl somewhat incautiously obeyed the summons; but, finding himself charged with the feudal offence of having acknowledged Edward as his superior, and commanded to remain in the city of Paris for fifteen days, he began to be alarmed, and returned privately into Bretagne, before the French king knew of his departure.

The Parliament of Paris proceeded, in the absence of the Count de Montfort, to adjudge the Duchy to Charles of Blois and his wife, as legal heirs to the deceased duke, adding, at the same time, that De Montfort, even had he ever possessed an interest in the fief, had forfeited it, both by doing homage to the King of England,

and by breach of his arrest, contrary to King Philip's orders.

The King of France, at the same time, commanded his eldest son, the Duke of Normandy, to assist Charles of Blois in regaining possession of those towns in Bretagne which De Montfort had taken and garrisoned. A vigorous attack was instantly made for the recovery of Bretagne, and Charles de Blois, by the assistance of a French army, in which a distinguished warrior, called Louis de la Cerda, more commonly Louis of Spain, acted as marshal of the host, had the good fortune to retake the capital of Nantes, in which Earl Montfort himself was made prisoner. He was sent to Paris, and imprisoned in the Louvre, where he long remained, entirely lost to his party. In most cases, therefore, the war would have been at an end ere it was well begun; and the scheme of Edward to obtain access to France, by the way of Bretagne, must have been totally frustrated. This was, however, prevented, by the masculine courage of the Countess Jane de Montfort, wife of the imprisoned earl, and sister to the Earl of Flanders.

This lady, who says Froissart, « had the courage of a man and the heart of a lion, » being in the city of Rennes when her lord was taken, scorned to yield to the grief with which that event oppressed her; but, assembling her friends, presented to them her young son, John, as successor to his rights, who, by the grace of God, should be the means of restoring his father unto

his family and friends. She undertook also to pay the soldiers regularly, and inspired a spirit of resistance into her party, which might have been supposed to have been utterly extinguished by her husband's misfortune.

Notwithstanding the resistance of the countess, Rennes was yielded to Charles de Blois, and there seemed little chance of any effectual stand being made, till she threw herself into Hennebon, a strong town in Bretagne, situated on the sea-shore, in which she was accompanied by the flower of her partisans, and where she prepared for a gallant defence. She herself wore armour, and rode through the streets on a mettled charger, exhorting the citizens to resistance. Her women were not excepted from martial labour, for she caused them to cut short their gowns, that they might be more active, and carry stones and other missiles to the walls, to make good the defence.

The French having attempted to carry the town, by a general assault upon one side, the countess made a sally on the other, and set fire to the Frenchmen's camp, while they were engaged in the assault; and upon this and other occasions, did great damage to the besiegers. Notwithstanding this, and the valour and military skill which she displayed in making good the defence, the town suffered severely in the progress of the siege. The walls were so much shattered by the engines, that the Bishop of Leon, who visited the place in person, as a friend

of Charles de Blois, pressed the conductors of the defence very much to come to terms with the besiegers. His arguments, and the desperate condition of the place, made considerable impression upon several of its defenders. The valiant countess now became alarmed for the defection of her followers, and piteously entreated them to hold out, were it but for the space of three days ónly, during which time she asserted she was certain that the city would be relieved. Nevertheless, on the second day the Breton lords of her party again met in council with the Bishop of Leon, adjusting terms for the capitulation of Hennebon; and Charles of Blois, who was with the besiegers in person, had approached the walls with a strong party, to be in readiness to take possession of the place.

At this critical moment, the valiant Countess, in a state wellnigh approaching to despair, cast an almost hopeless glance upon the sea, from a lofty window of the castle, when, what was her joy to discover the horizon covered with the masts of a large navy, steering towards Hennebon! She exclaimed joyfully, « The Red Cross! the Red Cross! the succours of England are in sight!»

The Breton lords speedily changed their purpose of surrender, and dismissed the Bishop of Leon, to whom they were formerly disposed to listen, while Charles of Blois, incensed at his disappointment, approached to the walls the greatest engine the besiegers had in their camp.

The English, who had been forty days delayed on the sea by contrary winds, now landed at Hennebon. They formed a small army, commanded by Sir Walter Manny, a Flemish lord in the service of King Edward, and one of the most renowned warriors of that period. The very next day after his arrival, he expressed his wish to come to action. «I have a great desire,» he said, «to issue from the town, and to break down yonder great engine, which they have brought so near us.» The Breton lords within the place gladly assented. They burst forth from the gates, broke the engine to pieces, and pursued those who guarded it to the camp of the besiegers. The host of the French now began to get under arms, to protect the fugitives; and Sir Walter, seeing their main body advancing, turned against them with the chivalrous protestation, «May I never be beloved of my lady, if I refuse to break a lance with these pursuers!» He turned accordingly, and many a knight was unhorsed, and deed of arms done. With equal prudence as valour, Sir Walter Manny, after a gallant skirmish, drew off his forces under cover of the ditches, which were lined with English archers, and returned to Hennebon, where the Countess of Montfort, as we are informed by the chronicle, kissed him and his brave companions twice or thrice, like a valiant lady. The siege of Hennebon was accordingly raised (A. D. 1342).

Many skirmishes were fought, in which the

English courage, and the excellence of their archers, gained an ascendancy, which was exceedingly mortifying to Charles de Blois, and to Don Louis of Spain, who acted as marshal of his army.

The latter was a general of great courage and conduct, but nevertheless was tinged with the vindictive and cruel temper which was supposed peculiar to the Spanish nation. Moving along the coast of Bretagne with a strong force of Spaniards and Genoese, he destroyed a seaport town called Guerande, where he spared neither man, woman, nor child. Taking shipping at this place, Don Louis reached Quimperlé, another haven, where he landed, and, burning, sacking, and destroying the whole surrounding country, collected a great spoil. But while he was thus engaged, Sir Walter Manny, who had put to sea in pursuit of him, arrived at Quimperlé, with three thousand English archers, and a sufficient number of men-at-arms. The English instantly seized upon the French ships and booty, which remained unprotected in the port of Quimperlé, while Don Louis himself, with his soldiers, continued to ravage the neighbourhood; and Sir Walter Manny, landing with his forces, set off in pursuit of his enemy. They met and engaged with fury. The English archers displayed their usual superiority. Don Alphonso, the nephew of Don Louis, was killed on the spot; the Genoese and Spaniards dispersed themselves, and were destroyed by the Bretons, as they fled in different di-

rections. Don Louis, much wounded, with great difficulty made his escape in a swift-sailing skiff, which held only a few of his followers.

Notwithstanding these successes on the part of the Countess of Montfort and her auxiliaries, the forces of Charles de Blois daily increased; and it became obvious, that although the troops of Sir Walter Manny were sufficient to deliver the countess, and to protect her person, yet more numerous and effectual succours were necessary for obtaining success in her undertaking, and maintaining Bretagne against the power of France. Charles of Blois had succeeded in taking the important towns of Vannes and Karhuis, and had resolved again to attack Hennebon, which might be considered as the principal seat of the war, since the countess and her son resided there, secure in the strength of the place, which was protected by strong trenches, to which the sea was admitted, and no less secure in the valour of Sir Walter Manny, and the English auxiliary forces.

Determined, therefore, to renew the siege, Charles of Blois and Don Louis of Spain reared up against Hennebon sixteen engines of the largest size, with which they cast great stones into the place, and ruined the walls and defences. The besieged, however, strengthened their defences with a great number of woolpacks, which broke the force of the stones; this encouraged the countess and her auxiliaries so much, that they upbraided the besiegers by calling from the

walls, « Why bring you not up the troops whom you carried from hence to Quimperlé?» This insult was particularly directed against Louis of Spain, whose pride was highly offended at being thus reminded of his shameful defeat, the loss of his army, his own wounds and flight, and the death of a beloved nephew. He chose a mode of revenge, which accorded ill with the honourable sentiments by which men of his rank were then expected to guide themselves.

Passing to the tent of Charles de Blois, Louis of Spain desired of him a boon, in requital of all the service which he had done him; this was readily granted. When his request came to be explained, he demanded the persons of two gallant English knights, who had been made prisoners, when wounded, that he might do with them according to his pleasure; declaring at the same time, that in revenge of the insults of the people of Hennebon, and of the defeats he had suffered from the English, it was his purpose to strike off the heads of the prisoners within sight of the walls. Charles of Blois, who was a courteous and accomplished knight, answered the Spaniard that his boon should be readily granted, were it not asked for a purpose which would dishonour Don Louis himself, and occasion the English generals to use retaliation on the prisoners of their party. Don Louis to this expostulation sullenly replied, that if Charles did not grant him the boon he required, he would on the spot renounce both his cause and his com-

pany. Charles of Blois, unable to dispense with the Spaniard's services, thought himself obliged to deliver up the two English prisoners, who were named Sir John Butler and Sir Matthew Trelawney, to be used as Don Louis pleased. Nor could any entreaty of those around divert the Spaniard from his savage and unknightly resolution of having them publicly executed shortly after dinner upon the same day.

Sir Walter Manny, being informed of the imminent danger in which the two valiant knights stood, addressed his followers thus: «Great honour were it to us should we be able to save the lives of yonder knights; and even the attempt, though unsuccessful, will be praised by our good King Edward, and by all men of worth who shall hear thereof.» With this resolution, which was adopted with acclamation by all who heard the proposal, the greater part of the garrison, being six thousand archers and three hundred men-at-arms, under the command of a gallant Breton knight, Sir Aymery of Clisson, sallied forth suddenly, and with great vigour, against the camp of the French, which they furiously assailed. The besiegers immediately took to arms, and the battle became very hot. In the meantime, Sir Walter Manny, taking a hundred men-at-arms and five hundred archers, whom he had reserved for that purpose, and sallying from a private postern, fetched a circuit, and fell upon the camp of the enemy, in a quarter where he met so little opposition, that he

penetrated to the tent where the two knights were confined. Here he found them bound, and prepared for instant execution. He cut their bonds, mounted them on horseback, and carried them off in triumph, thus delivering them from the destiny allotted to them by Louis of Spain.

After sustaining this insult, Charles of Blois and his party, finding no chance of possessing themselves of Hennebon, raised the siege, and withdrew, after having established a truce with the Countess of Montfort, which was to endure to the 15th of May following, when the weather would permit the campaign to be opened anew.

In the winter season the heroic countess herself, with some of her principal partisans, made a visit to England, where she kept her Christmas in high state, honoured by all, as became her courage and celebrity.

Early next year (A. D. 1343), an auxiliary army was raised in England for the service of Bretagne, and Robert of Artois, already mentioned, was its destined commander. He put to sea about the middle of May, in which month the truce with Charles of Blois expired. The noble Countess de Montfort returned to Bretagne with the same armament. Near Guernsey they fell in with the fleet of France, commanded by Don Louis of Spain, often already mentioned, and a brave leader as well on sea as on land. Both parties encountered with mutual animosity, the Countess de Montfort keeping the deck of her

vessel with a drawn sword in her hand, like the knights and men-at-arms on both sides. The engagement was very fierce, being on the one side maintained by the cross-bowmen of Genoa, and on the other by the English archers, both renowned for their skill in their weapons; but the fleets were parted by a storm, without the battle being decided for either party.

When Robert of Artois arrived in Bretagne with his forces, which were rather select than numerous, he made his first attack upon the strong city of Vannes, which he took by surprise. The success of the English in this enterprise induced their leaders to divide their forces. One party went to Hennebon, with the Countess of Montfort and Sir Walter Manny; another, under the Earl of Salisbury and Pembroke, laid siege to the city of Rennes, and Robert of Artois was left, with very inferior forces, in possession of Vannes, his late acquisition. Here he was suddenly surrounded by twelve thousand French, assembled for the purpose of overpowering him. The besiegers, being at the same time afraid that they might themselves be attacked by the English, who lay before Rennes, made a sudden and desperate attack on the city of Vannes, and took it by storm. Robert d'Artois was much wounded, and narrowly escaped to Hennebon. From thence he took shipping for England; but being detained upon the sea, his wounds rankled, and he died shortly after arriving in London. Thus perished that unfortunate exile, whose personal

resentment and vindictive counsel had been so immediately the occasion of this bloody war. Even his death appeared to be the means of exasperating it. Edward III, who loved Robert d'Artois, and considered him as a martyr in his cause, swore he would not rest till he had revenged his death, and for that purpose he would lead an army in person into Bretagne. He kept his oath accordingly, and arrived in that province with considerable forces in October 1343.

Philip of Valois now saw the necessity of making a great exertion. He commissioned his son, John Duke of Normandy, to levy as strong a force as possible, and drive the English from Bretagne. Accordingly, this young prince raised an army, amounting to more than forty thousand men, greatly superior, of course, to those Englishmen who had been sent thither under Robert d'Artois, even when united with the army under Edward himself. A battle might have been expected between two such considerable armies; and such a crisis seemed, indeed, to be actually approaching. King Edward encamped his army, now assembled into one body, before the city of Vannes, and the Duke of Normandy approached the same town upon the other side, with a view to raise the siege; but both armies were in a state of such difficulty as prevented their acting with effect. The English could not prudently make any attempt upon Vannes in presence of the French host, while, on the other hand, the French army, though more numerous, dared

not assault the English, secured as they were by their strong intrenchments. Thus the armies lay fronting each other, both sufficiently distressed for want of provisions. Little passed but skirmishing. At length the contending princes became inclined to listen to the arguments of two cardinals, sent by the Pope to mediate a pacification between France and England, if such were possible. These eminent churchmen laboured so effectually, that, in 1343, a truce was concluded between King Edward and the Duke of Normandy, in the name of his father. France was therefore, for the present, relieved from the presence of the English armies and their warlike monarch; but the quarrel was too much embittered to permit of a speedy settlement.

It was not long before both kings accused each other of breach of the agreement, and of actions inconsistent with the truce. King Philip of Valois (A.D. 1344) gave particular occasion to the charge, by putting to death certain Breton lords who had adopted the party of De Montfort, and who had fallen into his hands during the war, as well as others whom he considered as intriguing with Edward, though they had hitherto preserved the external appearance of French subjects. Among these was the Lord of Clisson, a brave, powerful, and popular noble. On the other hand, the French king complained that King Edward kept on foot his party in Bretagne by all manner of indirect intrigues. In short both monarchs expressed themselves deeply offended with each

other, and desirous of renewing the war as soon as convenient.

The English parliament, although the French war entailed on the nation a burdensome and useless expense, entered nevertheless warmly into the passions of Edward, advised him to prosecute the war with vigour, and granted him large subsidies to enable him to do so. The king, thus encouraged by his subjects, sent in 1344 a small army into Guienne, of great part of which province, it must be remembered, the English were still possessed; and also in the same year despatched reinforcements to the party of De Montfort in Bretagne, where very many of the Bretons themselves, highly incensed against the French for the cruel execution of several of their nobles, were in arms for the Countess of Montfort. The English troops sent to Guienne were placed under the command of the king's near kinsman, Henry of Lancaster, Earl of Derby. By the good management of this gallant chief, the English army took various towns in the south of France, and defeated in battle the French army under the Count de l'Isle, an excellent general.

The circumstances of the action were something extraordinary. A strong castle in Gascony, called Auberoche, had been taken by the English, and three knights of their party were stationed there with a garrison, for the defence of the place. The Count de l'Isle, who had hitherto been outshone in activity and adventure by the

Earl of Derby, now thought of recovering his reputation by regaining this place of Auberoche. He conceived he should be able to achieve this by such a rapid concentration of his forces, as he trusted might enable him to carry the castle, before the Earl of Derby, who was lying at Bordeaux, could entertain any suspicion of his purpose. He summoned therefore around him all the vassals within reach, who owned the authority of the King of France, and having thus assembled a considerable army, suddenly laid siege to Auberoche, where the small English garrison were totally unprovided for defence. The Frenchmen brought with them, to the attack of the place, four very powerful engines, which they employed day and night in casting such huge stones as broke down the battlements, and shattered the roofs of the castle so much, that the garrison were compelled to shelter themselves in the vaults and cellars. The besieged knights saw no chance of escape or relief, unless they could communicate their hard case to the Earl of Derby, then lying at Bordeaux, and request him to advance to their deliverance.

One of their attendants undertook this perilous task, and, in the character of a Gascon peasant, attempted to pass through the camp of the enemy; he was discovered, however, and seized. The letter of the besieged knights to the Earl of Derby, which the captive messenger bore, informed the besiegers of the straits in which the

garrison was placed; and, in order to make the besieged aware that their messenger had been intercepted, the French cruelly put the poor fellow upon one of their engines, and cast him into the town, accompanied with the insulting taunt, «Ask your messenger, sirs, where he found the Earl of Derby, since he went out but last night, and is returned again so shortly.»

Frank de la Halle, a gallant German, and a faithful follower of Edward III, who was one of those within the castle, answered boldly, «Sirs, though we be inclosed here, we shall issue when it pleases God; and as to the Earl of Derby, if you will let us send a message to him touching our condition, there is not one of you will keep the field till his coming.»—«Nay,» answered the besiegers, «this shall not serve your turn; it will be time enough for the Earl of Derby to know of your condition when the castle is rendered.»—«That it shall never be!» answered Frank de la Halle; «we will rather die in its ruins.»

All these proceedings before Auberoche were conveyed to the Earl of Derby by a spy, whom that nobleman had in the French camp. So soon as he received news of the distress of the besieged, he assembled his troops, and sent to the Earl of Pembroke, then at Bergerac with a still larger force, to join him upon his march towards Auberoche. In the meantime he himself instantly set forth, accompanied by the Earl of Oxford, Sir Walter Manny, Lord Ferrars, Sir

Richard Hastings, and other good knights, though having with them few followers. They tarried for some hours at a village called Lyborne, to abide for the Earl of Pembroke, who did not appear. On the succeeding evening they left the village, and, riding all night, were within two leagues of Auberoche in the dawning. Here they lighted from their horses, and made a halt till it was noon, still hoping for the Earl of Pembroke's junction. He came not, however; and the English were now obliged to consider whether they should venture to prosecute their enterprise with their own slender force. They were only three hundred spears, and about six hundred archers, while the army of the French lying before Auberoche amounted to ten or twelve thousand men. The determination was not easy, for, while the gallant knights felt the shame of abandoning their companions at Auberoche, it seemed rash to go on at such a disadvantage. « In the name of God, » said Sir Walter Manny, at length, « let us direct our march upon Auberoche, under cover of this wood, which we may skirt without being descried, till we come upon the rear of the French where we are divided from them by open ground, and then take the advantage of a sudden and unexpected attack. »

To this the valiant knights present readily agreed, and the men-at-arms continued their march towards Auberoche, till they reached a small valley, where the Frenchmen lay encamp-

ed,—none of them thinking of an enemy, and most of them busied with their supper. The English men-at-arms then issued from the wood, having gained the rear of the besiegers, displayed their banners and pennons, dashed their spurs into their horses, and rushed upon the enemy, crying their war-shout of « A Derby! a Derby!»

The sudden surprise compensated for the inferiority of numbers; and such French knights and men-at-arms as could prepare for battle on the spur of the moment, found themselves exposed to the shot of the English archers, who were placed ready for that service. The Comte de l'Isle was taken in his tent, with many others. The besieged knights, also, hearing the tumult, and seeing the English ensigns, instantly armed themselves, and, rushing out, plunged into the thickest of the battle, and augmented the confusion of the French, who sustained, though by very inadequate means, a complete discomfiture. Their general, the Comte de l'Isle, with nine earls and viscounts, and almost all the lords, knights, and squires of his army, remained captives; and there was scarce an English man-at-arms who had not two or three prisoners.

On the next morning, the Earl of Pembroke appeared at the head of a strong body of English, and blamed the Earl of Derby for engaging the enemy without him, since he might be sure, that, being sent for, he would not fail to keep the appointment. The Earl of Derby answered gently,

that they had already tarried many hours for their companions; and that, had he suspended the attack longer, they might have been discovered by the enemy; in which case, the French might have attained the advantage which had so fortunately fallen to the English.

Thus terminated the campaign under the Earl of Derby, during the year 1344. In spring 1345, the Earl of Derby, now become Earl of Lancaster by his father's death, was reinforced from England, and resumed his career of conquest in Gascony; and, as well by taking several towns, as by skirmishes in the field, gained great honour for himself, and extended in that province the authority of England. The Duke of Normandy, at the head of the knights and chivalry of that duchy, continued the principal opponent of the English, and the war was carried on with great activity on both sides.

It is impossible for us to give a minute description of these events, although the gallantry with which they were performed, has enabled the celebrated Froissart to decorate his splendid pages with many details of romantic chivalry. It will be more useful for you to obtain some idea of the description of troops that formed the armies by which these wars were carried on, and of the tactics upon which they acted.

You are already aware, that the strength of the armies in the fourteenth century consisted in cavalry, which was levied almost entirely upon feudal principles, with the exception of

the mercenary troops, who must be considered separately.

The regular feudal horsemen consisted of the knights, of whom I have endeavoured to give you some idea, together with their squires, pages, and personal attendants. The number of those who waited upon each knight, varied with circumstances; in especial cases, according to the means that their master had of maintaining them, as well as to his fame in arms; but generally amounted to about five men for each lance, that is, as the retinue of each knight. This chivalry was called out as vassals of the crown, of whom the leaders held their lands, and their service was considered as rendered in requital of their several estates; each powerful crown vassal being attended of course by his subordinate dependents, who served him on the same terms as he served the crown. Such was the system upon which the feudal cavalry were formed.

But it must be recollected that every knight was not necessarily possessed of land, which he held for military service; on the contrary, very many were elevated to that dignity, who either never had any estates of their own, or who had spent, or otherwise lost them. This must have been frequently the case, since the dignity of knighthood could be conferred upon any one whom an individual knight judged worthy of the honour. The order could, therefore, be multiplied to an infinite number, without re-

gard to any thing but the personal qualities of those on whom it was conferred, and especially to their skill in arms and military exercises. The number of knights, without either lands or substance, who sought adventures, merely to essay their courage, and push their fortunes in life, was very great; and these « bold bachelors,» as they were called, were the flower of every feudal army. They subsisted by the bounty, or *largesse*, as it was called, of the princes whom they served, which was one great source of expense to those who embarked in war; and the intrepidity with which they engaged in combat was increased in proportion, in order to attract the favour of their leader.

A successful war had also its peculiar advantages to those chivalrous adventurers. The knights, or nobles, who were overcome in battle, and compelled to yield themselves to the more fortunate among the victors, « rescue or no rescue,» were obliged to purchase their liberty at such sum as might be agreed on. The conditions of these bargains were well understood, and the prisoner, according to his rank and wealth, adjusted with his captor the price of his enfranchisement. On this subject, so much generosity prevailed among the French and English in particular, that the victorious party frequently did not carry their prisoners off the field, but freely dismissed them, under the sole condition, that they should meet the captors afterwards, at a time and place fixed, and settle

the terms of their ransom. To fail in such an appointment would have been, on the part of the captive knight, held most unworthy and dishonourable, and he would have exposed himself to the scorn of the ladies, minstrels, and heralds, to stand high in whose praise was the especial object of every true son of chivalry.

Besides these casual profits, which, when the war was successful, and the enemy wealthy, often rose to a great sum, the knights adventurers, in time of peace, wandered from court to court, and castle to castle, exhibiting their skill in tournaments, gaining the favour of the lords under whose patronage such martial exercises were displayed, and sometimes acquiring the love of heiresses, by whom their fortunes were established. In the meantime, rich prizes were often gained by the victors in these military exhibitions; while, at any rate, the expenses of the knights who attended them, as well as of their retinue, was defrayed with prodigality by the sovereign prince, or high noble, at whose court the entertainment was given. Thus, though without lands and revenues, hundreds and thousands of those sons of chivalry subsisted with ease and honour, during this romantic period. There were also numbers of knights, doubtless, who died in poverty and misery, and the end of an unsuccessful expedition was usually signalized by the total ruin of the knights-adventurers who had been engaged in it. Such were

the cavalry, the very flower, of course, of the feudal armies.

The appointments of these knights consisted in a suit of armour, more or less perfect, which defended the whole person. Sometimes it was made of mail, that is, links of iron, forming a sort of network dress, which covered the person, and was almost impenetrable either to sword or lance. Latterly, the armour was composed of plates of iron, which protected the men-at-arms from head to heel. The offensive weapons of the knight were, a lance, twelve or fifteen feet long, a heavy sword, a dagger, and often a species of battle-axe, or a steel club, called a mace-at-arms. The horse, like the knight, was covered, either with a housing made of mail, or with armour of plate. When mounted, and charging in squadron, as the knight and his horse were almost invulnerable, so their attack was well-nigh irresistible. Sometimes it was thought necessary to employ the men-at-arms on foot, on which occasion, they were commanded to put off their spurs, and cut their lances to the length of five or six feet, so as to make the weapon less unwieldy.

The men-at-arms were sometimes liable to be surprised. Upon a march they seldom wore the weightier parts of their armour; and their heavy war-horse was rode, or led, beside them by a page, while the knight himself bestrode a hackney, to receive his armed horse fresh for the

moment of battle. A sudden attack, therefore, was apt to discompose the men-at-arms before they could be fully prepared for action. If the war-horse was killed in battle, the knight was, in most instances, taken or slain, since he could not raise himself from the ground, without assistance from the squires or pages who attended for that purpose.

We are now to consider the state of their infantry, which, in comparison, was of a very inferior description.

We must remark one great distinction, however, in favour of the archery of England, a species of troops almost unknown to any other country, and possessing qualities which decided very many battles in favour of their own. You can easily conceive that the infantry of every nation must be divided into two kinds, calculated for two distinct services, to which their weapons are severally adapted; one of these distinct species of force must be armed with missiles for distant warfare, the other, with weapons fitted to strike or thrust in a close encounter. Modern times indeed have, in a great measure, united them both, by adopting the musket and bayonet; the former for more distant, the latter for close combat. But at the period we speak of, no weapon existed possessing this double advantage. Of the troops then employed, the bowmen of England were the most formidable at a distance. They were selected from the yeomen of the country, men to whom the use of the

weapon had been familiar from childhood; for the practice of archery was then encouraged by prizes and public competition, in every village, in order to keep up the skill which the youth had acquired, and to extend the renown of England, as producing the best bowmen whom the world had ever seen.

The equipment and mode of exercise of these archers were calculated to maintain their superiority. Their dress was light, and had few ligatures. Instead of the numerous strings which then attached the jacket to the hose or trousers, one stout *point*, as it was called, answered the necessary purpose, without impeding the motions of the wearer. In battle the sleeve of the right arm was left open, to increase the archer's agility. Each of them carried a bow, and twelve arrows, or, as they termed them, «the lives of twelve Scots,» at his girdle; their shafts had a light forked head, and were carefully adjusted so as to fly true to the aim. In using the weapon, the English archers observed a practice unknown on the continent, drawing the bowstring not to the breast, but to the ear, which gave a far greater command of a strong bow and long shaft. Their arrows were, accordingly, a cloth yard in length, and their bows carried to a prodigious distance. Upon the battlements of a castle, or walls of a town, the arrows fell with the rapidity of hail, and such certainty of aim, as scarcely permitted a defender to show himself; nor were they less formidable when discharged against a

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hostile column, whether of cavalry or infantry, and whether in motion or stationary. The principal danger to which the archers were exposed was that of a rapid and determined charge from cavalry. To provide in some degree against this, each archer used to carry a wooden stake shod with iron at both ends, the planting of which before him might, in some measure, afford a cover from horse. They had also swords. The stakes, however, were not always in readiness, nor were they always found effectual for the purpose, neither were their swords an adequate protection against cavalry. At the famous battle of Bannockburn, Bruce obtained that decisive victory chiefly by a well-executed manœuvre for cutting to pieces the English archers, by a body of horse reserved for that service. Two or three other cases may be noticed, in which the French obtained similar advantages over the archers, by providing themselves with *pavisses*, that is, long targets, strong enough to protect them from shot. But these cases are very few, in comparison to the numerous instances in which the long bow proved superior both in France and Scotland.

The second division of the English infantry destined to fight hand to hand, was armed with *bills*, as they were called, weapons similar in shape to those knives with which husbandmen dress hedges, but placed upon longer handles. These two kinds of weapons were used by the English infantry, so exclusively, that their cry to arms used to be, « Bows and bills!—bows and

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bills!» It is remarkable that both the national weapons were used by the contending parties in the battle of Hastings, where the Normans were armed with the long bow, and the Saxons with the gisarme, or bill. The armies of the English, in later days, had troops armed with both, as intended not only for distant but close combat.

The bill which they used in close fight was a formidable weapon, though clumsy in action, since it required to be wielded with both hands, and therefore prevented those who used it from forming a compact body. It was certainly unequal, in a fair field, to the lances of the Scottish, nor does it seem to have given to those who bore it, any permanent or assured superiority over the same force in the French army.

This may, however, be said with truth, that neither the bowmen nor billmen of England were, generally speaking, exposed to the same oppression to which the peasants of France were subjected, and that, possessing a more independent character as individuals, they were less liable to lose heart in danger, and more eager to sustain their national reputation. Upon the whole, however, the efforts of the infantry were so little relied upon at that period, that little was trusted to them in action, except in the case of the English archers. The men-at-arms on both sides might be considered as upon an equality; and the infantry who fought hand to hand, were so much so, that, in so far as regards that class

of soldiers, it was accidental circumstances only which could decide the event of a field betwixt France and England.

To oppose the archery of their national antagonists, the French had no better resource than hiring, from Genoa and elsewhere, Italians and other strangers, well skilled in the use of the cross-bow, a species of weapon accounted so murderously fatal, that it was at one time prohibited by an edict of the Church as unchristian. To defend a fortress, or the walls of a town, where the shooter was in some degree sheltered by a parapet, the cross-bow was indeed a terrible instrument, though even there it was often found inferior to the English long-bow; still more was this the case in an open field, where an English archer might shoot five, or perhaps ten arrows, while the difficulty of charging these steel-bows, which required to be bent by the slow operation of a windlass, hardly permitted the cross-bowman to send forth a single bolt. Of this you will find instances in the succeeding chapter of this volume.

The ordinary infantry of France, levied among the lowest drudges among her peasantry, added much to the numbers, but little to the military strength, and a great deal to the unwieldy confusion, of their great armies. These poor men felt that they were little trusted to, and cannot be supposed to have displayed much zeal in behalf of masters by whom they were contemned and oppressed. They wore almost no defensive

armour, if we except tanned hides, and were irregularly armed with swords, spears, or clubs, as offensive weapons. No kind of discipline was taught them, and when attacked by the men-at-arms, they seem frequently to have made no more effectual defence than might have been expected from a flock of sheep.

I may here mention, that gunpowder was discovered about this time; but at this, and down to a much later period, it was little used or understood in war. One author pretends that Edward III had field-pieces at the battle of Cressy; but, had it been so, it seems probable that so remarkable a circumstance would have been more generally noticed. Such awkward and unwieldy cannon as the age possessed, were chiefly used in sieges. They were clumsy to transport, slow to load, and often burst when discharged. So that, as already hinted, it was long ere the invention began to produce that alteration in warfare, which it finally accomplished to so great an extent.

Such being the general state of the French and English armies, so far as they consisted of national troops, I have now to remind you, that the armies of both were often augmented by the mercenary soldiers of the period,—men who had learned, among the tumults of the age, the desperate trade of war, and who, without acknowledging any nation or king of their own, were desirous to afford the benefit of their discipline and experience to those who were most

willing to pay for their assistance. These bands were composed of adventurers of different nations, commanded by approved soldiers, who were sometimes recommended by their birthand rank, often by their superior activity and rapacity, but in all cases by their valour and success. These leaders followed upon a greater scale the course of individual knights, and hoped, not by their own prowess alone, but by the assistance of the soldiers whom they levied and commanded, to rise to wealth and consequence. These bands were the terror and scourge of the peasantry, whom they oppressed without mercy, since, when they were not in the actual pay of some prince, they subsisted themselves by force at the expense of the natives of the country in which they resided for the time.

The Kings of England, and especially of France, set themselves at times seriously about the task of extirpating these debauched bands of ruffian soldiery, who, having no home or country of their own, were a general plague to other nations. But the purpose of extirpation was never effectually followed out; for the sovereigns were every now and then taught by necessity the convenience of being able to collect for a certain expenditure of treasure a body of experienced soldiers, as brave and better armed than any whom they could levy in their own dominions, and thus were freed from the necessity of depending on the humour of a fickle and overgrown crown vassal, who might be pleased

with an opportunity of distressing and contradicting his liege lord, and enabled to rely upon that of a mercenary leader, whose faithful adherence might be calculated upon so long as his pay was duly furnished. Thus the same plague which was complained of during the reigns of Stephen and John of England, and the contemporary sovereigns of France, revived in its wildest extent, during the calamitous period which we are now treating of.

CHAPTER IV.

Edward III loses several of his Adherents in the Low Countries, as the Brewer D'Arteville, and the Counts of Hainault and Montfort—his Interest is espoused by Godfrey of Harcourt, a discarded Favourite of the King of France—by the advice of Harcourt, an Invasion of Gascony is resolved on, and takes place—Philip assembles an army at St Denis, and marches to the defence of Rouen, which is threatened by the English—Manœuvres of Edward, by which he accomplishes a passage from the left to the right bank of the Seine—after two days' march, followed by the French Army, he crosses the Somme, and takes up battle-ground in the Forest of Cressy—the French come up—Battle of Cressy.

In the last chapter, we gave a brief account of the manner in which troops were trained and armed during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. We must now return to the proper subject of this little work, which is intended to convey some general idea of French history, especially as it bears upon, and is connected with, that of Britain.

I must first observe, that the plans by which Edward III endeavoured to establish himself on the throne of France, and to revenge the affront which he had received from Philip of Valois, were rather more frequently changed than ac-

corded with that prince's consummate sagacity. In 1343, he again returned to a project in which both his grandfather and he had already failed; namely, that of attacking France upon the eastern frontier, by means of the Brabanters, Flemings, and Germans. But, on the present occasion, he did not appeal to the nobles or princes of Flanders, but to the inhabitants of the great towns, in which he followed a policy adopted at one time by Philip the Fair, although his successors had exchanged it for the counter-plan of supporting the earls and nobles of the Low Countries, against the insurgent citizens of the trading towns.

We have already observed, that Edward was in close correspondence with Jacob d'Arteville, a brewer of great wealth and importance, who appeared for a time to have the command of all the common people of the great towns of Flanders. Through means of his influence with this demagogue, Edward had formed the plan of advancing his own son, also named Edward, afterwards the celebrated Black Prince, to the dignity of Earl of Flanders, in preference to the natural lord, Louis, who was attached to the French interest. The proposal, however, was so disgusting to the more moderate burgesses to whom it was communicated, that D'Arteville, who had lately reigned like a prince among them, was now looked upon with as much abhorrence as ever he had been held in estimation. At length, the displeasure of the citizens against him rose

so high, that as this once powerful demagogue rode into Ghent, accompanied by a small guard of Welshmen, who had been appointed to attend him by Edward III, he was encountered by such evil looks and menaces, that he was compelled to take refuge from popular indignation in a house, which the Welshmen for a space defended. But this place of refuge being afterwards forced by the multitude, they were themselves the assassins of their former favourite; and with him perished Edward's hope of establishing his son as Earl of Flanders.

Edward sustained another loss about the same time (A. D. 1345) in the person of his brother-in-law, the Count of Hainault, a brave young man, who was slain in an attempt to subdue the revolted natives of Friesland. Sir John of Hainault, uncle to the slain prince, became, after his death, unfriendly to Edward, to whom he had been hitherto attached, but, as he thought, without receiving adequate requital. He therefore left the service of the English king for that of Philip of France.

About the same period also (A. D. 1345) according to the opinion of most historians, John de Montfort escaped from a French prison, or was set at liberty by Philip, in consequence of the previous truce, and once more took the field in Bretagne, with the assistance of an English auxiliary force, under the Earl of Northampton. They laid siege to Quimperlé, where the Count

of Montfort completed his career of misfortune, by dying of a fever before the town.

Upon the whole, therefore, these successive losses of powerful friends diminished the various means by which King Edward had hoped to make an impression upon France, either on the eastern or western frontier.

In this same eventful year, 1345, however, Edward III acquired another councillor, who fled from the enemy, by whose advice he again altered, in a great measure, the direction of his attacks upon France. This was a powerful nobleman of Normandy, named Godfrey of Harcourt, Lord of Saint Saviour Le Vicomte, and brother to John, Earl of Harcourt. Sir Godfrey himself had once stood as high in the favour of Philip of Valois, as any nobleman of his kingdom. But upon the occasion of a quarrel betwixt him and Sir Robert Bertram, Marshal of France, the king took the part of the latter so earnestly, that, could he have got Sir Godfrey into his power, there is little doubt that he would have dealt with him as with the Breton Lord of Clisson, whom, on small suspicion, he caused to be executed for alleged adherence to the English interest. Sir Godfrey of Harcourt fled in good time to England, and, like Robert of Artois before him, employed his address and eloquence, both which he possessed in perfection, to animate the King of England to make Sir Godfrey's own country of Normandy, the principal scene of his

attacks upon France. « It is,» said Godfrey of Harcourt, « one of the most plentiful provinces in the kingdom; it has not witnessed war for two ages, and is occupied by great and wealthy towns, unprotected by any adequate fortifications. The nobility of Normandy are,» he continued, « now absent from the country, having accompanied Philip's eldest son, John, who has conducted them southward to carry on the war with Gascony.» The exile urged that Normandy was an ancient inheritance of England, which they might now recover with little trouble, and which, if subdued, would be a conquest glorious to King Edward, particularly useful from its vicinity to England, and an event not altogether displeasing to the Normans themselves.

Encouraged by this advice, Edward III put himself (A. D. 1346) at the head of a considerable army, which he pretended was designed for prosecuting the war in Gascony. But, instead of holding this course, the king, when embarked, steered straight to the coast of Normandy, and landed at the town of La Hogue. Upon information that his ancient enemy had accomplished his present attempt at invading France in a new direction, the King of France failed not to collect the whole force of his kingdom, together with those of his allies, John of Luxembourg, the old King of Bohemia, with his son Charles, Emperor-elect of Germany, the Duke of Lorraine, John of Hainault, once the King of England's ally, Louis, Earl of Flanders, and Jacques, titular

King of Majorca. The titles of some of these princes were more considerable than their power, but still, by their assistance and that of his own liegemen and great vassals, Philip found himself at the head of a powerful and gallant army, which emboldened him to swear resolutely that the King of England should not return to his own country without battle, in which he should be sufficiently punished for the slaughter, depredation, and extreme violence, which he was now exercising in the kingdom of France. The greater part of Philip's army was assembled at St Denis, close to Paris; but the king himself, assuming the command of such forces as could be got presently in readiness, moved down the Seine to defend Rouen, the capital of Normandy, which was threatened by the English.

In the meantime, Edward III divided his strong army into three bodies; the first of which was commanded by himself; the second by the Earl of Warwick; and the third by Sir Godfrey of Harcourt, whose advice the king used, as principal marshal of his army during all this expedition, of which indeed he had been the main author and adviser. The English, as Sir Godfrey had prophesied, found the cities of Normandy at once wealthy and ill-defended, so that they made very great spoil with little danger, while the loss to the unfortunate inhabitants was, as usual in such cases, much greater than the riches acquired by the invaders. The city of Caen, full of merchandise and wealth of every

kind, was carried by storm, after such a resistance that Edward, in resentment of so obstinate a defence, would have burnt the place to the ground, had not Sir Godfrey of Harcourt's intercession deterred him from this violence.

It may be mentioned, that while Normandy was sustaining this severe treatment from the land forces in the interior, the English fleet was as busily employed plundering, destroying, and burning the seaport towns on the coast, with the shipping which they contained. In this manner the English monarch ascended the left bank of the river Seine, with the purpose of assaulting Rouen, the capital of Normandy. This, however, was prevented by the march of Philip of Valois to its relief, before noticed. The river Seine now divided the two armies; and, all the bridges being broken down, neither host durst pass the river for the purpose of attacking their enemy, lest in the act of doing so they should be taken at advantage by that which held the opposite bank. The French king, in particular, was more reconciled to postpone a general battle, being conscious of possessing a great superiority of numbers, from which he entertained a well-judged hope that Edward's army, prevented from crossing the river, might be enclosed in the country on the opposite side, and compelled to fight at disadvantage.

In the meantime the citizens of Paris were in the utmost confusion, knowing the near approach of the English army, and afraid of the terrors

of military execution, attendant on the march of Edward, who was by no means famed for clemency. King Philip with difficulty persuaded them that the measure which he had taken, of marching down the right bank of the Seine, which had the appearance of leaving Paris open to the enemy, if the English should ascend the opposite bank, was, in fact, that which was best adapted to cover his metropolis.

It soon, however, became plain, that Edward had no design against the French capital; for that king, having made a sudden movement upon Poissy, repaired the bridge there, which had been but imperfectly demolished, and, by an able military manœuvre, crossed the Seine, and moved eastward towards Flanders. He thus extricated himself from the difficulty in which Philip conceived him to be involved.

When the English monarch had attained the right bank of the Seine, the fires raised by his soldiery, in their destructive progress, alarmed the capital once more; but the English, after defying the King of France to instant battle, departed towards Beauvais, of which town they burnt the suburbs. In this manner eluding the French army, King Edward pursued his course with all diligence towards Flanders, closely followed by King Philip and his army.

But after a day or two's march, the English king seemed once more entangled in the toils drawn round him by his enemy. The march of the English was here interrupted by the deep

river Somme, impassable at all points, and on which every bridge had been destroyed. To have awaited the advance of the numerous French army, with an impassable river in his front, would have been a perilous adventure. The King of England was therefore extremely desirous to find the means of passing the deep Somme, although a noble French lord, called Gondemar de Fay, was upon the opposite bank, at the head of the gentlemen of Artois and Picardy, with the purpose of defending the passage, which must be at best a dangerous one, with a superior army in the rear, and over a river which was so near the sea as to be affected by the tide. Having made inquiry among the French prisoners concerning the means of crossing, and offered liberty for himself and thirty of his companions, to whomsoever should point out a practicable ford, King Edward received from one of his captives the following agreeable intelligence. « Know, sir, that during the ebb-tide, which happens twice in twelve hours, the river Somme is so low that it may be passed with security either by horse or foot, at a ford to which I can guide you. At this place the bottom is hard and firm, and being composed of chalk, and similar materials, it is called Blanchettaque (that is, *white water*).»

Overjoyed at this news, Edward drew his army to the ford, where, as the flood tide was still making, he was compelled to wait for an hour or two. In the meantime, Sir Gondemar de Fay,

made aware of the purpose of the English, drew up his men, who amounted to near twelve thousand, on the opposite side of the river, resolved to dispute the passage. But the moment had no sooner arrived when the ford was practicable, than Edward, having commanded his marshals to enter the river, called aloud, « Let those who love me follow me,» and plunged in among the foremost, his army following in good order. Notwithstanding a valiant opposition on the part of the French, who defended the opposite bank, they were compelled to give way, after losing two thousand men-at-arms, and the greater part of their infantry, who had no means of escape from the English cavalry, so soon as the passage was completed.

This was a very delicate and important manœuvre on the part of the English, for the main army of Philip followed so close, that part of King Edward's rear-guard suffered from the vanguard of the French, before they could cross the river. Philip himself soon afterwards came up, and having been full of hope either that the English would not discover the ford at Blanchetaque, or that it might be effectually defended against them by Sir Gondemar de Fay, he was proportionally vexed at finding how the English monarch had again extricated himself from the risk of being compelled to fight at disadvantage, and exclaimed. though unjustly, against Sir Gondemar de Fay, as guilty of treason and disloyalty, in failing to make good his post.

By the advice of his best leaders, the French king agreed that he would not follow the English by the ford, lest the enemy should turn back and attack him in the passage; but, drawing off his army to Abbeville, he judged it better to secure the bridge over the Somme, at that town, and after spending a day there to refresh his troops, and give such forces as followed in his rear time to come up and join him, he might then advance in quest of the English. Accordingly, Philip spent the 25th of August in the manner recommended.

In the meantime, King Edward, being now on ground fitted for engaging the enemy, declared his purpose, that he would pursue his retreat no farther, but fight with Philip of Valois, whatever the odds of numbers might be. «This county of Ponthieu was the just heritage of Queen Eleanor, my mother,» said he; «I now challenge it as my own; and may God defend the right!»

The place where he made this declaration was open ground, called the Forest of Cressy, a name which has been made memorable by the events of the following day. The army of the English was here drawn up arranged in three divisions, to await the advance of the French.

In the first, was Edward, Prince of Wales, now in his sixteenth year, but of strength and courage far beyond his age, and whose brief life has made historians observe, that few characters have put more feats of heroism into the compass of so

few years. Many veteran warriors were placed under the command of the young prince, who was thus ranked foremost in the battle; but Lord Warwick, and Lord John Chandos, were specially intrusted by his father with the task of directing and defending him in any difficulty. His division amounted to eight thousand men-at-arms, four thousand archers, and six thousand Welshmen.

The second battalion consisted of eight hundred men-at-arms, two thousand four hundred archers, and four thousand bill-men.

The third, and last battalion of the English, was commanded by the king in person, and consisted of seven hundred men-at-arms, six thousand archers, and four thousand three hundred bill-men. The full amount of the English army was probably about thirty thousand men.

These three divisions were drawn up in the order which they were to preserve in battle, and then appointed to take refreshment, and go to sleep on the grass, upon their arms. The night was warm, and rendered this interval of repose acceptable and refreshing to troops, fatigued with long marches and spare diet. Their spirits were gay and cheerful; and though they were conscious of considerable inferiority in numbers, the reflection, far from inducing them to doubt of the issue of the day, inclined them only to pay more scrupulous attention to the command of their officers, by whose guidance they

hoped to gain it. The presence of their experienced monarch, and his valiant son, filled the host with hope and confidence.

Next morning was the memorable 26th of August, 1346. Early in the morning the English army arose in the same order in which they had lain down to rest the evening before.

The French forces were some time in coming up. During this interval, to increase the enthusiasm of his soldiers, Edward conferred the honour of knighthood on the Prince of Wales, and a large band of noble youths, companions of the heir-apparent, who were expected so to behave in the conflict as to *win their spurs*; that is, to show themselves worthy of the distinction they had received, by their admission into the order of chivalry, of which the spurs were an emblem.

On the same morning (A. D. 1346, Aug. 26), King Philip, mustering his army at sunrise, led them forth from the town of Abbeville, where they had passed the night, and, with more haste than caution, advanced towards the English, a distance of between three and four leagues.

Many circumstances contributed to increase King Philip's confidence, and impress upon his army feelings which amounted to presumption. They had for several weeks been superior to their enemy in the field; and, since the crossing of the Seine, as well as the subsequent passage of the Somme at Blanchettaque, it had been the object of the English to avoid that engagement

which was now fast approaching. The French cavalry had also received a gallant addition from the arrival of Amadeus, Earl of Savoy, who, the very day before the battle, joined Philip, at Abbeville, with a thousand lances, a great addition to his previous superiority. These encouraging circumstances inspired into both officers and soldiers an imprudent degree of haste and precipitation, as was natural to men who conceived that they were in chase of a flying enemy.

The movements of this great army were therefore hurried, like that of men who advanced to a pursuit rather than a battle. Yet all did not partake the sanguine hopes which dictated these hasty movements. The advice of a veteran German warrior, sent to reconnoitre the English army, strongly recommended to King Philip to halt the advance of his own forces, and put off the battle till next morning: « The English,» he said, « have reposed in a position which they have deliberately adopted, and doubtless will not shrink from, without a desperate defence. Your men are tired with their long morning's march from Abbeville, confused with the haste of their advance, and must meet, at great disadvantage, a well-arranged enemy, refreshed by food and repose.»

The King of France listened to this experienced counsel, and expressed his desire to follow it, by halting his army for the day, and postponing the battle till the morrow. But the evil fate of France had decreed that his purpose should not

be carried into execution. The troops who formed the vanguard of the French host, halted indeed at the word of command, but those who came behind hurried onward, with the idle bravado that «they would make no stop till they were as far forward as the foremost.» In this way they exhausted their spirits, expended their strength, and confused their ranks, many brandishing their swords with idle exclamations of «Attack, take, and slay!» before they were even in sight of the enemy. To stop men in this state of excitation was impossible.

King Philip, thus hurried forward to battle by the want of discipline of his own troops, had divided his army into three bodies. The first was under the command of the King of Bohemia, seconded by Charles of Luxembourg, his son, Emperor-elect of Germany, and of Charles, Earl of Alençon, the brother of King Philip, a brave, but fiery and rash young cavalier. The Genoese cross-bowmen, fifteen thousand in number, were all placed in this first division. The French accounted them a match for the English archers, and trusted that their superior discharge in the commencement of the action would clear the field of these formidable forces. They had also more than twenty-nine thousand men to support their bowmen.

The second division was commanded by King Philip himself, with his broad banner displayed, surrounded by six thousand men-at-arms and forty thousand foot. The blind old King of

Bohemia was afterwards posted into this second division, as well as James, the titular King of Majorca.

Lastly, the rear division of the French was led by the Earl of Savoy, with five thousand lances and twenty thousand foot.

These large bodies appear to have been unequally divided, probably owing to the state of confusion into which the French army was undoubtedly thrown by their too hasty advance, which rendered it difficult to transmit and execute orders.

On the approach of the Genoese towards the English position, these strangers, who formed the vanguard of the French army, gave signs of fatigue, from marching three long leagues with their weighty cross-bows. When the word was given to «begin the battle, in the name of God and St Denis,» the Italians answered by remonstrances, saying, they had more occasion for rest than to fight that day. This moved the resentment of Alençon, the commander of the division, who said with contempt, «A man has much help from these fellows, who thus fail him at the pinch!» The order for attack was therefore repeated, and obeyed.

Some singular appearances in the atmosphere now seemed to announce the great and bloody conflict which was about to take place upon the earth. A heavy thunder-cloud darkened the sun like an eclipse, and before the storm burst, a vast number of crows and ravens came driving before

the tempest, and swept over both armies. A short, but severe thunder-storm, with much lightning and heavy rain, suspended for half an hour the joining of the battle, until the weather became fair, and the sun began once more to shine out, darting his rays on the backs of the English, and in the eyes of the French.

The Genoese, now approaching towards the Prince of Wales's division, made a great leap and cry, thinking to daunt the English by the symptoms of instant attack; but King Edward's archers, who were drawn up with their ranks crossed after the fashion of a *herse*, or harrow, so that the shot of the one might support the others, (like that of the combined squares of musketry in modern warfare), remained firm and steady. The Genoese, a second time, advanced forward, leapt and cried without making more impression upon the English than before; a third time they advanced, shouted and leapt, and then began to use their cross-bows. But the English, who seemed only to wait for the actual commencement of hostilities, stepped each of them one pace forward, and shot their arrows so closely together, that it seemed as if it snowed. The volleys of the Genoese bolts were returned with this incessant storm of arrows, and with so much interest, that the Italians became unable to keep their ground. Their strings also had been wetted by the late storm, while those of the English had been secured in cases which they carried for the purpose. Finally, there were eight or

ten arrows returned, for every cross-bow shaft discharged. All these circumstances of advantage rendered the Genoese unable to withstand the English archers, so that that large body of Italians lost heart, and, cutting their strings, or throwing away their bows (as an excuse for not continuing the conflict), they rushed back in confusion upon the rest of the vanguard, and especially upon the men-at-arms, who were designed to have supported them. The confusion thus occasioned in the French army became inextricable, as the recoil of the cross-bowmen prevented the regular advance of the knights and squires, upon whom the ultimate fate of the day must necessarily depend, especially after the retreat of the Genoese. The King of France added to the confusion, by calling on the cavalry to advance to the charge, without any regard to the cross-bowmen, who, now a confused multitude of fugitives, lay straight in the way of their advance. «Slay me these peasants,» said he, «since thus they do but trouble us;» and the French men-at-arms advanced at full gallop on the unfortunate Italians, many of whom were thus trodden down and slain by their auxiliaries, while, at the same time, the ranks of the cavalry were disordered by riding over their own bowmen before they could reach the enemy.

In the meantime, the English archers kept pouring their shafts, without an instant's intermission, as well upon the Genoese who fled, as the French men-at-arms who were endeavouring

to advance, and augmented the dreadful confusion which took place. Many of the bravest French knights lay stretched on the plain, who might have been made captive with ease; but King Edward had strictly forbidden the taking of any prisoners during the action, lest the desire of securing them should be a temptation to his soldiers to quit their ranks. The grooms, therefore, and mere camp-followers of the English, had the task of dispatching the fallen with their knives; and by these ignoble hands much noble and knightly blood was shed.

Yet, notwithstanding the loss attending this horrible confusion, the courage of Alençon, and the native bravery of the French cavaliers, impelled them still forward. A part of them extricated themselves at length from the unfortunate Genoese, and pushed on along the line of English archers, by which they suffered great loss, until at length they arrived on their right flank, where the Prince of Wales was placed, at the head of his men-at-arms. By these, the French were so roughly encountered, that the greater part of them were beaten down and slain. But this victory was hardly won, before three other squadrons of French and Germans rushed on with such fury in the same direction, that they burst an opening for themselves through the archers, who had but imperfect means of repelling horse, and dashed furiously up to the place where the gallant prince was stationed. The Earl of Warwick now became alarmed; for he concluded

that the standards of the French king and his numerous army were following close upon the new comers. In this belief Warwick and Chandos sent to King Edward, requesting succour for his valiant son, when the following dialogue took place between the king and the messengers.

« Is my son, » said Edward, « dead, wounded, or felled to the ground? »

« Not so, thank God, » answered the messengers; « but he needs assistance. »

« Nay, then, » said King Edward, « he has no aid from me; let him bear himself like a man, and this day show himself worthy of the knighthood conferred on him; in this battle he must win his own spurs. »

In the meantime, a strong detachment of men-at-arms, dispatched by the Earls of Arundel and Northampton, the commanders of the second division, had relieved Prince Edward from his temporary embarrassment. And now the English archers opening in the centre, suffered their cavalry to rush forward through the interval, and encounter the French men-at-arms, who were in total confusion. This was augmented by the fierce attack of the English; and the most experienced on the opposite side began to despair of the day. The King of France himself fought with the greatest valour; was repeatedly wounded and dismounted, and would have died probably on the field, had not Lord John of Hainault led him off by force. Not more than sixty of his gallant army remained in attendance upon their

sovereign, and with these he reached, after nightfall, the castle of Broye. When the warder demanded what or who he was, « I am, » said the king, « the fortune of France ; »—a secret rebuke, perhaps, to those who termed him « the Happy, » an epithet not very suitable to his present condition, and which his own example shows, is apt to prove inapplicable if conferred before death.

The King of Majorca is generally said to have been among the fallen, and the slaughter among princes, counts, nobles, and men of rank, was without example. But the most remarkable death, among those of so many princes, was that of John, King of Bohemia, a monarch almost blind with age, and not very well qualified, therefore, to mix personally in the fight. When all seemed lost, the old man inquired after his son Charles, who was nowhere visible, having, in fact, been compelled to fly from the field. The father receiving no satisfaction concerning his son from the knights who attended on him, he said to them, « Sirs, ye are my knights and good liegemen, will ye conduct me so far forward into the battle, that I may strike one good stroke with my sword ? »

To satisfy this wish, which his followers looked upon as the words of despair, four faithful knights agreed to share their master's death, rather than leave him to perish alone. The devoted attendants tied the old king's bridle reins to their own, and rushed with him into the middle of the fight, where, striking more good

blows than one, they were all slain, and found there the next day, as they had fallen, with their horses' reins tied together.

Thus ended this celebrated battle. There lay upon the field of Cressy two kings, eleven high princes, eighty bannerets, one thousand two hundred knights, and more than thirty thousand private soldiers.

The meeting of Edward and his son took place by torchlight, after the battle was over. « Well have you won your spurs!» said the brave king; « persevere in the career which you have opened, and you will become the brightest honour of the noble kingdom of which you are the worthy heir.»

The battle of Cressy was one of the greatest victories ever gained by a King of England, and Edward prepared to avail himself of it, in a manner which should produce some permanent advantage.

CHAPTER V.

Edward resolves to secure a permanent footing in France, by making himself master of Calais—Siege of Calais—War in Bretagne—Siege of Roche-d'Arien—Anxiety of the two Monarchs, Edward and Philip, to obtain the Alliance of the Flemings—The People of Flanders favourable to Edward, and their Earl to Philip—Attempt of Philip to raise the Siege of Calais—it fails, and the Citizens are compelled to treat for a Surrender—Noble Conduct of Eustace de Saint Pierre and five other Burgesses, who, in order to save their Fellow-townsmen, deliver themselves up to Edward—they are ordered for execution by him, but saved by the intercession of his Queen, Philippa—Measures of Edward for securing possession of Calais—Sir Emeric of Pavia, Seneschal of the Castle of Calais for the English King, treats with Sir Geoffrey Charny to betray the place to the French for a sum of money—his Treachery discovered, whereupon he makes his peace with Edward, by undertaking to betray Sir Geoffrey; and on that Knight coming to receive possession of the Castle, Sir Emeric takes payment of the money agreed upon, and delivers Sir Geoffrey to an Ambuscade of the English under Sir Walter Manny, by whom the French Party are defeated, and their Leader Sir Geoffrey taken prisoner—Edward's Treatment of the Prisoners—Pestilence rages in France and England—Submission of Godfrey of Harcourt to the French King—Death of Philip.

THE result which Edward promised himself from his great victory, was, in fact, the opportunity of carrying into effectual execution the plan of

Godfrey of Harcourt, by obtaining a firm footing in Normandy. Spoil and havoc had hitherto seemed his only object; but it was his secret plan to attain some permanent possession in the province as near England as possible, so as to enable him to attempt future conquests in France. For this purpose, he resolved to avail himself of his victory, which he knew must long disable Philip from taking the field, to lay siege to Calais, a seaport rich and strongly fortified, being immediately opposite to the coast of England, from which it is scarcely fourteen miles distant. It was clear that, if the English should obtain possession of this place, the flat and swampy country around Calais would permit them easily to fortify it; and its vicinity to England, and the superiority of her naval power, would always afford means of relieving it when besieged. King Edward, therefore, sat down before Calais with his large army, shortly after the battle of Cressy, and proceeded, by every means in his power, to hasten the siege.

Philip of France, in the meantime, did all he could to obtain the means of recovering from the disaster of Cressy. He summoned from Gascony his son, the Duke of Normandy, who was engaged there with a considerable body of forces, partly in the siege of Aiguillon, partly in making head against the Earl of Lancaster, formerly Earl of Derby, who had found him employment for two campaigns. The retreat of the Duke of Normandy, in conformity with the orders of Philip,

left the west of France much at the command of this noble earl, whose soldiers were so much sated with spoil, that they hardly valued the richest merchandise, but were only desirous of gold, silver, or such feathers as were then worn by soldiers in their helmets.

While Philip, in this emergency of his bad fortune, thus abandoned a part of his dominions to save the rest, he endeavoured, by every argument in his power, and particularly by advancing large sums of money, to prevail upon the Scottish nation, and their king, David II, to declare war against England, by which means he hoped that Edward might be disturbed in his siege of Calais. The Scottish king and nation did, accordingly, unfortunately take arms, and began a war which was terminated by the battle of Neville's Cross, near Durham, in which they sustained a formidable defeat (A. D. 1346, Oct. 17), and their king, David, was made prisoner.

The siege of Calais still continued, the French making many desperate attempts to relieve it, and particularly by sending in provisions by sea. The low and swampy situation of the grounds around the town exposed the besiegers to great loss by sickness and disease; and the garrison of Calais did not omit to make many sallies, which were partially successful.

Meantime, the war in Bretagne still raged, betwixt the contending parties of Blois and De Montfort. A noble knight named Sir Thomas Dagworth, was created by Edward general of the

English auxiliary forces in that province, and carried over considerable succours to the valiant Countess of Montfort, who still maintained the war there in the name of her son.

Sir Charles de Blois, who claimed this duchy by the decision of the King of France, assembled among his partisans in Bretagne a very considerable force, amounting to no less than sixteen hundred men-at-arms, with a proportional number of cross-bows and infantry, and some formidable military engines; with this force he besieged a fortress, called Roche-d'Arien, which had lately been taken by the English. The captain of the garrison, whose wife was at the time indisposed, was so alarmed at the effect of the engines, that he offered to deliver up the castle upon easy terms, which Sir Charles de Blois was unfortunate enough to refuse. In the meantime, Sir Thomas Dagworth formed the resolution of relieving the garrison of Roche-d'Arien. He united his own forces with those of the Countess of Montfort, who were commanded by a good knight, called Tanguy de Chatel. In their first attempt on the French, who lay before Roche-d'Arien, the English and Bretons were defeated; but having by the encouragement of Sir Thomas Dagworth and of a Breton knight, called Garnier de Cadoudel, resolved to renew the enterprise, they made a second attack on the ensuing evening, when the victory of the French might be supposed to render them secure and unguarded. In this unexpected attempt their success was complete. The

French were surprised and totally defeated, and their general, Charles de Blois, became prisoner to his female antagonist, Jane de Montfort.

A similar heroine arose, however, in the family of Charles de Blois. His wife, a lady of a lofty spirit, undertook to maintain the war, which would otherwise have terminated in her husband's captivity.

In the meantime, the two contending monarchs were not idle. King Philip, who had already held a parliament (A. D. 1347), in which he prevailed upon his peers and liege vassals to lend him their utmost assistance, was employed in levying a strong army, with which he proposed to compel Edward to raise the siege of Calais. He used his utmost efforts to recover from ancient receivers and tax-gatherers the sums which they had not accounted for. Heavy assessments were also imposed as well upon the clergy as upon the laity, and great rigour was manifested in the mode of recovering payment. Philip even demanded from the monks of St Denis a crucifix of massive gold, being a treasure bestowed by the devotion of his predecessors. To this, however, the monks replied, that « the crucifix could not be taken away, or converted to a secular use, without inevitable danger to the souls of all parties concerned;» with which answer, even in the urgency of his necessity, he was obliged to remain satisfied.

The friendship of the Flemings was of equal im-

portance to both kings at this momentous crisis; in which country the affections of the prince and of the people remained divided as before. The free towns and their citizens were strongly inclined to England, and had settled that their young lord should wed the daughter of Edward III, the beautiful Lady Isabel of England. But the young earl himself objected to this match, and was inclined to the alliance of France, the rather that his father, a faithful confederate and vassal of Philip of Valois, had fallen in his quarrel at the battle of Cressy. The rude Flemings, incensed to find their prince averse to the policy which they recommended, laid violent hands on his person, and assured him he should not obtain his liberty till he consented to ally himself with England, and marry the Princess Isabel. The young earl, finding himself so roughly handled by his subjects, resolved to dissemble his sentiments, and carried his acquiescence so far as to go to King Edward's camp before Calais, with a party of Flemish citizens, who seemed to act as his tutors, and whose will he in no shape contradicted. He was well received by Edward, who even condescended to apologize for the death of his father, as an accident out of his power to prevent. Thus the young earl found himself in high favour with the English monarch, and paid his addresses to the Princess Isabel, with the same attention as if he had been serious in his courtship. In private, however, he meditated his flight, and being indulged

with permission to follow the sport of hawking, he availed himself of an opportunity, while apparently engaged in it, to make his escape by the speed of his horse, and took refuge at the court of France, where his presence was cordially welcomed by King Philip.

While these things were passing, the natives of Calais were reduced to the last extremity. They dispatched a messenger by sea with letters to King Philip, saying, that his good people of Calais, having eaten their horses, dogs, and rats, had nothing left to subsist upon unless they fed upon each other; wherefore they conjured their king to succour them, otherwise the town must be certainly lost. The vessel bearing these letters was taken by the English, and King Edward forwarded the missives to the French king, after having perused their contents, and superscribed them with a taunting indorsation, asking, « Why he came not to rescue his people of Calais, that were so distressed for his sake?» Philip needed no incentive either from friend or enemy, having assembled an army of a hundred thousand men, with the sole purpose of relieving Calais.

On the other hand, King Edward, considering the extreme importance of the place, and the trouble, expense, and loss, which it had cost him to bring it to its present reduced state, was determined that no effort of the King of France should avail for its relief. For this purpose he strongly fortified the approaches to Calais on every point, so as to make it impossible for King

Philip to draw near the place, or annoy the besiegers, either by an advance along the sea-shore or by the high-road. These were the only two roads practicable to armed forces, as all the rest of the grounds in the vicinity of Calais were swampy marshes, where troops could not act.

Against the approach along the sea-shore Edward had placed his ships, well supplied with artillery, and he had besides strongly fortified the shore. Similar defences were constructed on the causeway, which approached the town by the bridge of Neuillet.

When the King of France, therefore, with his immense host, approached the neighbourhood of Calais, he had the mortification to find that he could not, without the extremity of imprudence, attempt to enter the town either by the highway or by the shore, and to pass through the marshes was altogether impossible; after displaying therefore his great army at a place called Sangate, in sight of Calais and its besiegers, King Philip found himself entirely cut off from entering the place, and was compelled to withdraw without fighting. He endeavoured to rouse the pride of Edward by a letter, defying him to leave his fortifications, and fight in a fair field. Edward replied that « he took no counsel from an adversary; that he had been before Calais for more than a year, and had reduced the place to a state of extremity; that he would not quit the advantage which he had gained; and if Philip wished a passage into the town, he might seek

it as he best could, since he was to expect no assistance from him.»

The hopes of the people of Calais had been at first strongly excited, when they beheld from their towers the numerous forces of France advancing to their relief. The first day, therefore, they intimated their confidence of assistance by decorating their walls with banners, and for the same purpose lighted large bonfires, and sounded all their martial instruments of music, attended with loud shouts. On the second night, the bonfires were fewer, and the shouts less cheerful, than before. On the third night, the towers showed a decaying fire—emblem of expiring hope—and the acclamations of mirth and joy were changed into screams and groans, which seemed designed to attract pity. On the following morning, all the banners on the principal towers were lowered, save the banner of France, which still floated from its summit.

But when the inhabitants of Calais beheld at length the pennons of King Philip's host retiring from their view, they knew all hopes of those succours, which they had waited for so anxiously and vainly, were at an end. They had suffered such extremities, that human nature could endure no longer; and, to intimate that resistance was at an end, they lowered the banner of France, and displayed that of England in its place. But they had to learn that their obstinacy had offended King Edward more than either their gallantry or their reluctant submission could atone for.

He gave them presently to understand, that he would not receive their surrender, unless they yielded implicitly to his mercy, without any capitulation either for their lives or property. When this severity was objected to even by his own commanders, Edward would agree to show no further favour than to the following extent. He demanded that six of the chief burgesses of the town should come before him bareheaded, barefooted, and in their shirts, having halters around their necks, bearing the keys of the town and castle of Calais, which were to be humbly surrendered to him. These six men were to submit to the king's pleasure, how severe soever that might be, without reservation even of life; and in consideration of their doing so, the stern conqueror reluctantly promised that the rest of the citizens of Calais should have mercy.

These conditions were sent to the town, and read before the assembled citizens. The tidings were followed by a general lamentation, which, the difficulty of finding men willing to take upon themselves this strange submission considered, was not to be wondered at. After some deliberation, a burgess, the most substantial in the city, addressed the assembly. His name, Eustace de Saint Pierre, ought never to be forgotten while disinterested patriotism is held valuable among mankind. «He that shall contribute to save this fair town from sack and spoil,» said this gallant man, «though at the price of his own blood, shall doubtless deserve well of God and

of his country. I will be one who will offer my head to the King of England, as a ransom for the town of Calais.» The greater part of the assembly were moved by this speech to tears and exclamations of gratitude. Five other burgesses caught emulation from the noble devotion of Eustace de Saint Pierre, and offered to partake with him the honourable peril which he had incurred. They quickly put themselves into the humiliating attire required by Edward, but which, assumed in such a cause, was more honourable than the robes of the Garter, which that king had lately instituted. In their shirts, barefooted, and with the halter around their necks, they were conducted before Edward, to whom they submitted themselves for disposal, as the stipulated ransom for the pardon of their fellow-citizens. The king, looking on them with indignation, upbraided them with the losses he had sustained through their obstinacy, and commanded them to be presently beheaded. Sir Walter Manny, and the bravest English nobles and warriors, interfered to prevent the execution, and even the Prince of Wales interceded for their lives, in vain.

The Queen Philippa was the last resource of these unfortunate men. She had recently joined her husband's camp, in circumstances equally flattering to Edward as a monarch, and interesting to him as a husband. It was during her regency in England that the great victory of Neville's Cross had been obtained; and it was under

her auspices that David II of Scotland was made prisoner. The queen was also at this time with child, and thus in every respect entitled to the highest regard of her royal husband. When she saw that Edward would be moved with no less entreaty than her own, she rose hastily from her seat, and kneeled before the king, saying, with many tears, « Ah! my lord and husband, have I not a right to ask a boon of you, having come over the sea, through so many dangers, that I might wait upon you? therefore, let me now pray you, in honour of our Blessed Redeemer, and for love of me, that you would take pity upon these six prisoners!»

Edward looked doubtfully upon the queen, and seemed to hesitate for a space, but said at length, « Ah, madam, I could well wish you had been elsewhere this day; yet how can I deny any boon which you ask of me? Take these men, and dispose of them as you will.»

The gracious queen, rejoiced at having prevailed in her suit, and having changed the dishonourable attire of the burgesses for new clothing, gave each of them six nobles, for immediate use, and caused them to be safely conveyed through the English host, and set at liberty.

Edward III had no sooner obtained possession of Calais, than he studied to secure it by fortifications and otherwise, but particularly endeavoured, by internal changes among its inhabitants, to render it in future an important and permanent possession of the crown of England. For this

purpose, he dispossessed the inhabitants of Calais (who were, indeed, much reduced in numbers) of their houses and property within the town, and conferred their possessions upon Englishmen born. The new inhabitants whom he established in the town were substantial citizens from London, and a great number of countrymen from the neighbouring county of Kent, to whom he assigned the lands and tenements of the French. Calais became from that period, until the reign of Philip and Mary, in all respects a colony of England. The king also fortified the castle and the town with additional works. Lastly, before he set sail to return to England, Edward agreed to a truce with France, which lasted from 1347, until the year 1355, though not without infractions on both sides.

We must not here end the history of Calais without adverting to some circumstances which happened shortly after its capture, and are highly descriptive of the manners of the time.

In supplying the place with a new garrison, Edward had not omitted to chuse valiant officers, and such as he thought men worthy of trust. These were the Lord John Montgomery, as governor of the town, and, as seneschal of the castle which commanded the place, a Lombard knight, named Emeric of Pavia. This last officer was a favourite of Edward, in whose court he had been educated from childhood, but was infected with the vice of avarice, to which his co un trymen were esteemed to be generally addicted.

At the same time when Edward left Calais under such custody, a wise and valiant French lord, called Sir Geoffrey de Charny, acted as lieutenant for the French king, to defend his frontiers, near Saint Omers, and watch the garrison of the new English acquisition. This officer, who was high in his master's confidence, knew the failing of the Lombard governor, and tempted him, by offering the sum of twenty thousand gold crowns, to deliver up to him the castle of Calais. To this treacherous proposition, Emeric of Pavia acceded, and took a solemn oath to discharge faithfully his part of the bargain. This negotiation reached the ears of King Edward, who sent for the Lombard to come to see him in England, and, when Sir Emeric arrived there, took a private opportunity to charge him with having sold to the French the castle of Calais, the dearest thing he had on earth, excepting his wife and children. Emeric confessed the accusation, but returned a mercantile answer, that his bargain with Sir Geoffrey de Charny might as yet easily be broken, since he had received no part of the stipulated price. Edward, who had some regard, as we have said, for this venal knight, forgave him the treason which he had meditated, on condition that he should ensnare the Lombard to go on with his bargain, and that he should inform him of the time that he and Sir Geoffrey de Charny should finally fix upon for the surrender. Edward also gave his avaricious favourite permission to get as much money as he could from Sir Geoffrey de

Charny, provided he betrayed every particular of the negotiation to the king himself, and kept the whole matter a secret from others.

Sir Emeric, thus secured against the consequences of the treason, and resolved once more to be true to his indulgent master, returned to Calais, and, renewing his intercourse with Sir Geoffrey de Charny, fixed on the last night of December, 1348, as the term for executing their secret treaty for the surrender of the castle. King Edward, thus enabled to counteract the French stratagem, embarked very secretly with eight hundred choice men-at-arms, and a thousand archers, with whom he landed privately, and introduced them into the castle of Calais. He then called to him the celebrated Sir Walter Manny, and said, «Sir Knight, I mean to grace you with the honour of this night's enterprise, and I and my son will fight under your banner.»

In the meantime, Sir Geoffrey of Charny, contriver of this enterprise, arrived at Neuillet Bridge, on the causeway, or high road to Calais, with a part of his force, and there waited till the rest joined him. He then communicated with Emeric of Pavia, by messengers sent to the citadel; and, learning that the time for his admission into the castle was approaching, he dispatched twelve knights, and a hundred men-at-arms, having with them the money agreed upon, while he himself halted nigh to the nearest city-gate with the rest of his company. He left also a small rear-guard on the bridge at Neuillet. The captain of

the French advanced guard moved on towards the castle, and met with the double traitor, Emeric, at the postern of the fortress, which he kept open, as if to admit the French. They delivered to him the stipulated sum in French crowns. Sir Emeric took the money, and cast it into a chest, saying, « We have other work to do than to count money at present. You shall enter the donjon, gentlemen, and then you are masters of the castle.» But the French had no sooner entered at the postern of the castle, thus opened to them, than they were assailed in front, flank, and rear, by the English, who lay ready for them within the castle, and exclaimed, « Manny! Manny! To the rescue! What! thought a handful of Frenchmen to take the castle of Calais! » The French men-at-arms, surprised and outnumbered, rendered themselves prisoners, and were thrust into the donjon, not as conquerors, but prisoners, while the victors prepared to sally from the gates upon Sir Geoffrey de Charny and his party, the rear of whom held their post at the bridge of Neuillet, while the main body had advanced to the Boulogne gate of the town, expecting to be speedily called to the support of their advanced guard, who they calculated ought to be by this time in possession of the castle.

These were, however, at a loss to account for the delay of the expected surrender, and their commander was exclaiming impatiently, « Except this Lombard admit us hastily, we are like to starve here with cold.»—« Oh, sir,» said a French

knight of his company, «you must remember that the Lombards are a shrewd and suspicious people. I warrant me Sir Emeric of Pavia is counting his crowns, and looking that they be all of just weight.» As Sir Geoffrey and his party spoke thus among themselves, the Boulogne gate of Calais, to which they had approached, suddenly opened, and a body of men-at-arms issued forth in good order; most of them were dismounted, and they were attended by three hundred archers. The French, from this apparition, and the cry of «Manny, to the rescue!» instantly knew that they were betrayed; but, as the causeway on which they stood was narrow, Sir Geoffrey Charny exclaimed aloud, «Gentlemen, if we turn our backs, we are certainly lost; dismount speedily, and cut your spears to the length of five feet, for fighting upon foot.» The English, hearing these words, replied, «Well said, by Saint George! shame on them that shall first turn their backs!» Edward, who was himself engaged in this skirmish, though without any marks of royal distinction, dispatched six banners and three hundred archers on horseback, who, by a circuitous route, reached the bridge of Neuillet, where the French had left a rear-guard, as already noticed.

At this last place, the battle waxed very hot; but the Frenchmen were taken at great disadvantage, and, after a stout resistance, were compelled to retreat. In the meantime a furious contest was continued upon the causeway nearer to the town, between the troops of Sir Geoffrey

Charny and those under Manny. King Edward was distinguished amid the crowd of combatants by the exclamations of, «Ha, Saint George! Ha, Saint Edward!» with which he accompanied every stroke of his two-handed sword, seeking to match himself with the stoutest antagonist whom the affray afforded. He had the luck to encounter Eustace de Ribeaumont, one of the strongest men and best knights who then lived. This distinguished French champion gave the English monarch so stout a meeting, that he more than once nearly forced him upon his knees. Nor was it until the increasing numbers of the English, who sallied from the town to the assistance of their friends, rendered longer defence on the French part unavailing, that Ribeaumont resigned his weapon to the antagonist whom he only knew as a brave warrior, and said the fatal words, «Sir Knight, I surrender myself—rescue, or no rescue!» The French lost in this skirmish the greater part of the men whom Sir Geoffrey Charny had brought towards Calais, except some who had not alighted from their horses, and had therefore the means of escape; the rest were either slain or made prisoners.

King Edward caused his principal officers and prisoners to be feasted at supper that same night, in a great hall, where he placed himself at the head of a royal table. Here the king sat alone and in state, while the Prince his son, and the peers of England, served during the first course; but after this sacrifice to ceremony, the guests

were arranged without farther distinction at the same board. Edward walked up and down, bareheaded, excepting a circle of gold, and a chaplet of pearls of great value, around his brows, and passed in this manner around the table, and conversed freely with his captives. On approaching Sir Geoffrey Charny, the contriver of the enterprise, he said, with some signs of displeasure, «I owe you but little thanks, Sir Knight, who would have stolen from me by night what I won in broad day. You are a better bargain-maker than I, when you would have purchased Calais for twenty thousand crowns; but, God be praised, you have missed your aim.» The Lord of Charny, who was much wounded, remained silent and somewhat abashed, and Edward passed on to the other guests, to whom he spoke with much condescension and politeness. But it was upon Sir Eustace de Ribeaumont that Edward conferred the highest praises, styling him the most valiant and courageous knight in that skirmish. «Nor did I ever,» said the king, «find a man who gave me so much to do, body to body, as you have done this night. Wherefore, I adjudge to you this chaplet, as the prize of the tournament,» taking off the string of pearls which he wore. «I pray you to wear it for my sake at all festivals, and declare unto the ladies that it was given to you by Edward of England, as a testimony of your valour. I discharge you also of any ransom, and you are free to depart to-morrow, if such be your pleasure.»

In this strange anecdote, you may recognise some proceedings, which, had such taken place in our days, on the part of a great general and great monarch, would have necessarily been considered imprudent and inconsiderate. There was no great wisdom certainly in trusting to the double treachery of Emeric of Pavia, and there was great rashness in a monarch like Edward venturing his person, without any distinction of his rank, in the nocturnal confusion of so desperate a skirmish.

To encounter such dangers, however, was the proudest boast of chivalry; and a monarch, however wise and sagacious, was expected to court the most desperate risks of war, if he expected the praise of an accomplished knight, which was then held the highest that a man could aspire to, how eminent soever his hereditary rank. It is not less worth your notice, how generously Edward III rewarded the French knight who had struck him down in battle, although the same monarch could shortly before hardly be induced to pardon the six burgesses of Calais, whose sole offence was, the honourable discharge of their duty to their king and country, and the defence of their town. This is one instance among many, that it was reckoned presumption on the part of citizens or peasants, to meddle with martial affairs, which were accounted the proper business of the nobility and gentry, and their followers.

It is also remarkable, that the attempt upon Calais might have been made a legitimate pretext

for breaking off the truce, on the part of the King of England. But as Geoffrey de Charny pretended to no authority from the French king, and as Philip disclaimed the attempt, Edward III was well disposed to pass it over.

The evils of these continued wars, though carried on with great increase to the glory of individuals, were attended with so much misery to both kingdoms, that they probably never endured a greater state of wretchedness. In France, a pestilential disorder of a dangerous kind completed what had been commenced by want and bad nourishment. The populace died in great numbers, and those who remained entertained a natural horror of the feudal oppressors under whom they suffered such unpitied misery. This pestilence swept over not only the greater part of Christendom, but Africa, and Asia itself, and reached England, where it was equally fatal. It fell most heavily on the poorer part of the people; and of the inferior clergy so many died, that very many churches were without either parson or curate to serve the cure. Besides this disastrous scourge, the King of England, although his parliament had been repeatedly liberal in voting him supplies of money, was afflicted by the embarrassment of his finances. It was at a very extravagant cost that he had been able to support these wars of France, and the subsidies granted to him by his English subjects were speedily exhausted in the expenses which attended the prosecution of hostilities in a foreign country, and

the pay of many auxiliary troops. The large spoil made by the English soldiers, contributed, as usual, to debauch the morals of the people, and accustom them to extravagance and unbounded expense.

These national evils had at least one good effect; they restrained the Kings of France and England from renewing the war. The attempt, therefore, upon Calais passed over without notice.

It does not appear, however, that the treacherous governor, Emeric of Pavia, ever recovered the entire good opinion of the king. He was deprived of the government of the castle, the very day after the skirmish, and, although he remained in the service of the English king, he never appears to have regained his confidence. He was retained in his active service, however, took possession, by stratagem, of the fortress of Guines, near to Calais, and attempted also to surprise Saint Omers. In this last enterprise, Sir Emeric was defeated and made prisoner by his old acquaintance, Sir Geoffrey Charny, who availed himself of the opportunity to be revenged of his former treachery. He caused the Lombard to be put to death with all the dishonours of degradation, commanding his spurs to be hacked from his heels, as from those of one unworthy of the honour of knighthood, and his body to be torn to pieces by wild horses drawing in different directions; a cruel, yet not undeserved punishment, for the perfidious part he had acted at the attempt upon Calais.

But this last event took place after some others

that were of greater importance. One of these was the submission made by Godfrey of Harcourt, the councillor of Edward III, to his native kinsman and king, Philip of France. The penitent threw himself at that monarch's feet, with a towel twisted round his neck, in the form of a halter, confessing the remorse which he felt for having been a principal cause of the defeat of Cressy, and regretting that he should have added to the number of those French princes of the blood-royal who had so often contributed to the misfortunes of their native country. Philip, though subject to violent passion, was placable upon submission, and forgave a penitent against whom he had several real subjects of offence. Their reconciliation did not, however, last long.

Shortly afterwards, the King of France united the county of Dauphiny to the crown, by marrying his grandson Charles to the heiress of that province. The dauphin himself retired from the world, and became a monk; and Charles, the husband of Joan, was the first French prince who bore the title of dauphin, afterwards selected as that of the successor to the crown of France. Charles is often termed Duke of Normandy, a county which his father John possessed until he acceded to the crown. In 1349, Philip of Valois himself wedded the Princess Blanche, sister of the King of Navarre; but he did not long survive this union, having died (A. D. 1350) in the twenty-third year of his reign, and the fifty-seventh of his age.

Philip of Valois was hated by the nobility, on account of the frequent encroachments which he made on their privileges, and for the readiness with which he subjected many of their number to capital punishment. He obtained, at the commencement of his reign, the title of the Fortunate, because, although three predecessors stood between him and the throne, he had nevertheless the good luck to obtain possession of it; but, as happened to other princes, the long course of unsuccessful war in which he was engaged, and the miseries undergone during his reign, would better have entitled him to the surname of the Unhappy.

CHAPTER VI.

Accession of John the Good—Truce with England violated, but renewed—Intrigues of Charles King of Navarre—Charles assassinates the Constable of France, and extorts his Pardon from the King—Edward and his Son, the Black Prince, invade France, and ravage the Country—the Black Prince winters at Bordeaux—King John assembles a large Army, marches into Poitou, and comes up with the English encamped at Maupertuis, within two leagues of Poictiers—Battle of Poictiers—King John taken prisoner—his Reception by the Black Prince—Return of the Prince, with his Prisoner, to England.

JOHN, DUKE OF NORMANDY, ascended the throne on the death of his father, Philip of Valois. He had attained the mature age of fifty, had commanded armies with reputation, had acquired character for both courage and conduct, and was, in every respect, a more hopeful prince than his predecessor.

Yet King John of France, though distinguished by the flattering surname of the Good, early evinced a course of severity, which occasioned much unpopularity. At a solemn festival at Paris, immediately after his coronation, he caused to be arrested Rodolph de Brienne, Count of Eu and of Guines, and Constable of France, who was accused of wishing to let the English mo-

narch have possession of his county of Guines, adjacent to the town of Calais. The unfortunate constable was arrested, and beheaded, in presence of the lords of the council, after three days' confinement, and without any form of trial; an execution, which greatly awakened the fears and suspicions of the nobility, respecting the new king.

In the year 1349, the English commander in Bretagne, Sir Thomas Dagworth, fell into an ambuscade, said to consist of banditti, by whom he was slain, in violation of the truce. In resentment of this slaughter, Henry Plantagenet, already celebrated under the titles of Lancaster and Derby, to which that of Earl of Lincoln was now added, was sent as Edward's lieutenant-general into Bretagne, with an army which his reputation soon augmented to thirty thousand men.

In the meantime, in contempt of the truce which still subsisted, constant skirmishes were fought between the French and English, which hovered between the character of hostile engagements, and of the tournaments which that age considered merely as martial recreations. In these stormy times, the various commanders of garrisons made war upon each other, as they saw occasion or opportunity, without the kings positively either authorizing or resenting their quarrels; and in this manner much blood was spilt, of which neither prince was willing to acknowledge the blame. The Pope, Innocent XI, again used his intercession to prolong the truce, which

seemed of such uncertain character, and succeeded in his endeavours in 1353, although he was unable to bring the kingdoms to such a solid peace, as his holiness desired.

About this time, King John and his court were extremely disturbed by the intrigues occasioned by his young kinsman, Charles, King of Navarre. This young prince, nearly connected with the French crown, his mother being a daughter of Louis X, called Hutin, possessed at once the most splendid and the most diabolical attributes. He was handsome, courageous, affable, liberal, and popular in his address, and a person of great talents and ingenuity. Unfortunately, he added to these gorgeous qualities a turn for intrigue and chicane, together with an ambition altogether insatiable, and a disposition capable of carrying though the worst actions by the worst means. From this latter part of his character, he received from the French the name of Charles the Bad, or Charles the Wicked, which he appears abundantly to have deserved, since even the strong tie of his own interest could not always restrain his love of mischief.

On the arrival of this monarch at the court of John (A. D. 1351), he set up various pretensions to favour, both with the king and people of France, and rendered himself so agreeable at court, that he carried his point of marrying Joan, the daughter of the French monarch. He demanded certain places in Normandy; and when the king, to elude his pertinacity, conferred that

county upon Charles de la Cerda, his constable and favourite, the King of Navarre did not hesitate to assassinate that unfortunate officer, in his castle called De l'Aigle, in Normandy. Having committed this atrocity, he afterwards boldly avowed the deed; put himself at the head of troops, and affected independence; treated with the English for their assistance; leagued together all the fiery and disaffected spirits of the court, that is to say, great part of the young nobility who frequented it, in opposition to the crown; and threatened to create such confusion, that King John felt himself under the necessity of treating with this dangerous young man, instead of bringing him to justice for his crimes. Charles of Navarre, however, refused to lay aside his arms, or come to court, unless upon stipulation for an absolute pardon for the death of the constable, great cessions in land, a large payment of money, and, above all, complete security that such terms should be kept with him, in case King John were disposed to grant them.

John of France saw himself, by the necessity of his affairs, obliged to subscribe to these demands, which were rather dictated than preferred by his refractory vassal. He was even compelled to give up his second son to Charles of Navarre, as security that the promises given to that turbulent prince should be faithfully kept. After this, it was in vain that John desired to conceal his weakness under a pompous display, designed to show that the pardon of Navarre was not

granted in virtue of a previous stipulation, but the result of the king's own free will.

In March 1355, this high offender came to Paris in person, as had been previously agreed upon, and appeared before parliament, where the king was seated on the tribunal. Here Charles of Navarre made a formal speech, acknowledging his errors, and asking forgiveness, with some affectation of humility. The Duke of Bourbon, then Constable of France, placed his hands upon those of the royal criminal, in symbol of arrest, and led him into another apartment, as if to execution. The Queens of France (of whom there were at that time three), threw themselves at the feet of the monarch, to implore pardon for one so nearly connected with his family, and the King appeared reluctantly to grant what he dared not have refused, for fear of retaliation on the prince, his son. It is probable that the whole ceremony had no effect, except that of incensing the King of Navarre, and irritating his love of mischief, which he afterwards repeatedly displayed, to the great prejudice of the King and kingdom of France.

In the meantime, King Edward, fully expecting that this discord between King John and Charles of Navarre would break into an open flame, made preparations to take advantage of it. For this purpose, he constituted the Black Prince, who obtained that celebrated name from the constant colour of his armour, his lieutenant in Gascony and Aquitaine, and sent him over

with a considerable army, which, by the number of troops there levied, was augmented to about sixty thousand men. With this large force the young Edward marched into the country of Toulouse, taking several towns, which he burnt, wasted, and destroyed. But Charles of Navarre becoming for the present reconciled with the King of France, the Prince of Wales returned to Bordeaux, after these extensive ravages.

His father King Edward was, on his part, no less active in the desolation of France. While the Black Prince laid waste the southern provinces of that country with fire and sword, the father landed at Calais, and marched from thence towards Saint Omers, where King John lay at the head of a considerable army. The recollections of Cressy perhaps made the King of France decline an engagement; so that King Edward, unable to bring the French to action, returned to his own country to advise with his Parliament, and make head against the Scottish nation, who, notwithstanding all their losses, were again in arms. It has been reasonably suggested, that injured pride and wounded feelings, the recollections of the dishonour sustained at Cressy, and the hope of avenging the disgrace of that day, were more powerful with John of France, than any reasons of sound policy, in inducing him to refuse the offers preferred by Rome for establishing peace between the countries. The scene of blood and devastation which all France presented, the ravages of the pestilence and the

total silence of law and justice throughout a kingdom which strangers and robbers had in a manner partitioned amongst them, made the country at that time in every respect unfit to maintain a war with a powerful and active enemy. It was, however, the fate of King John to rush without reflection upon dangers yet greater, and losses more disastrous, than those which had befallen his unfortunate father. A period now approached much celebrated in English history.

The Prince of Wales, who had spent the winter in recruiting his little army at Bordeaux, resolved the next year to sally forth, to lay waste the country of the enemy, as he had done the preceding summer. King John, on the other hand, having determined to intercept his persevering enemy, assembled the whole force of his kingdom, in number twenty thousand men-at-arms, headed by the king himself and his four sons, and most of the princes of the blood, together with the whole nobility and gentry of France, few of whom chose to stay at home, when called to attend the royal standard, under the pain of infamy. Scotland sent him an auxiliary force of two thousand men-at-arms. With this overpowering army, the King of France marched into Poitou, where Prince Edward lay encamped at the village of Maupertuis, within two leagues of Poictiers, and resolved to engage him before he could regain Bordeaux.

With numbers so unequal, the Prince of Wales dared hardly attempt a retreat, in which he was

likely to be destroyed by the enemy. He therefore took up a strong position, where the advantage of the ground might in some measure compensate for numerical inferiority. King John, on the other hand, had at command the choice of fighting instantly, or of surrounding and blockading the prince's army as they lay. But the same spirit of offended pride which disposed the French king to continue the war, stimulated him to rush to instant battle. On the other hand, Prince Edward had fixed upon a place so well suited for defence, that it presented, in a great degree, the advantages of a fortress. His army scarcely numbered the eighth part of that which was arrayed against him; but perhaps it was, even for that very reason, more fit to occupy and defend a strong and limited position.

This memorable field was a gentle declivity, covered with vineyards, which could only be approached by one access of no great breadth, flanked by thickets and hedges. To add to the strength of the ground, the English laboured hard at fortifying it, and disposed every thing so as to cover their ranks with trenches, in addition to the trees, bushes, and vineyards, by which it was naturally defended. Amidst these natural and artificial defences, and only accessible by this narrow and difficult pass, the English troops, about ten thousand men, were drawn up on the side of the gentle acclivity, with the good sense and judgment which, from his early days, had distinguished their eminent commander.

Sir Eustace de Ribeaumont had the honour to carry to King John of France an account of the English position, which he thus described : « Sir, we have seen the enemy. By our guess, they amount to two thousand men-at-arms, four thousand archers, and fifteen hundred or two thousand other men; which troops appear to us to form but one division. They are strongly posted, wisely ordered, and their position is wellnigh inaccessible. If you would attack them, there is but one passage, where four horsemen may ride abreast, which leads to the centre of their line. The hedges which flank this access are lined with archers, and the English main body itself consists of dismounted men-at-arms, before whom a large body of archers are arranged in the form of a *herse*, or harrow. By this difficult passage alone you can approach the English position. Think, therefore, what is to be done.»

King John resolved, that, in such difficult circumstances, the attack must be made on foot. He commanded, therefore, his men-at-arms to dismount, cast off their spurs, and cut their spears to the length of five feet, in order to do battle as infantry. Three hundred men-at-arms alone were commanded to remain mounted, in order that their charge might begin the combat, break the archery, and make way for the columns of infantry; and in this order King John resolved to undertake the attack.

The battle having been thus determined upon, a noble churchman, the Cardinal of Perigord,

visited both the French and English armies, to incline them to peace. The Prince of Wales, being so greatly outnumbered, was not unwilling to listen to honourable terms; but the King of France insisted that Edward and his principal lords should remain prisoners. « I will never yield me prisoner,» said Edward, « until I am taken sword in hand.»

But before the battle took place, one or two circumstances happened, highly characteristic of the spirit of the times.

It chanced that the celebrated John Chandos was, on the morning before the action, reconnoitring the French host, while Lord Cleremont, a marshal of the French army, performed the same duty on the other side. These two knights bore the same device, which was the Virgin Mary, surrounded by sunbeams. This was in those days a great offence; and it was accordingly challenged by Cleremont with these words: «How long is it, Chandos, since you have taken it on you to bear my device?»

« It is mine own,» said Chandos; « at least it is mine as well as yours.»

« I deny that,» said Cleremont; « but you act after the fashion of you Englishmen, who have no ingenuity to devise your own appointments, but readily steal the invention of others.»

« Let us prove which has the right in the battle to-morrow,» answered Chandos, « since to-day is truce, on account of the cardinal's negotiation.» They parted thus upon terms of mutual defiance.

On the evening of that same day, the Frenchmen dismissed the Cardinal of Perigord from their host, and desired him to bring them no more proposals of peace; so that the battle was now determined on by both sides. The churchman himself retired from the field; but some youths of his train, inspired by the splendid preparations for battle, remained and bore arms on the side of France, which was much resented by the Black Prince.

Early the following morning the valiant young Prince of Wales reviewed the position of his troops, and briefly said to them, «Sirs, be not abashed for the number of our enemies; for victory is not in the multitude of people, but where God pleases to grant it. If we survive this day's conflict, our honour will be in proportion to the odds against which we fight; if we die this day, there are men enough in England to revenge our fall.»

As the prince thus addressed his people, the Lord Audley came forward, and besought a boon of him. «My lord,» he said, «I have been the true servant of your father and of your house; and out of respect for both, I have taken a vow long since, that when I should be in any battle where the king your father, or any of his sons, should command, I will myself begin the battle, or die upon the place. May it please you now to permit me to pass to the vanguard, and accomplish my vow?»

The prince willingly granted his desire, say-

ing, « Sir James, God give you grace so to bear yourself, that you shall be acknowledged the best and foremost knight of all, this day!»

The prince then proceeded somewhat to change the order of his army. When reconnoitred by De Ribeaumont, he had shown only one division. But when about to fight, he divided his little army into three, drawn up close in the rear of each other, on the sloping and defensible ground we have described. He also placed, apart, a body of men-at-arms, under the Captal of Buche, designed to fetch a compass round the hill, unobserved, and fall on the rear of the French when they should commence the attack.

The French accordingly began the battle with the three hundred select men-at-arms, whom they had caused to remain on horseback, for the service of dispersing the archers, and forcing a passage for the rest of the army. These had no sooner entered between the hedges, however, than the archers, by whom they were lined, commenced their fatal discharge, and the horses of the men-at-arms recoiled and turned restive, disordering their own ranks, and rendering it impossible for their masters to perform the orders given to them. Sir James Audley, with four squires of undaunted valour, fought in the front of the battle, and stopped not to take prisoners, but went straight forward against all opposition.

It was in vain that a great body of dismounted

men-at-arms entered the fatal pass, under two of the French marshals, to relieve the mounted spearmen. One of these leaders was slain, the other made prisoner; and their troops, driven back, were thrown in confusion upon the second line, commanded by the Dauphin. At the same time, the strong body of English men-at-arms, who had been reserved for that service, with a corresponding number of archers, burst unexpectedly from the ambuscade, in which they had been till now concealed. This was commanded, as already mentioned, by the valiant Gascon knight, called the Captal of Buche, a faithful vassal of England. He attacked the French column on the flank and rear, and compelled it to fly. The Scottish auxiliaries shared the fate of their allies. The victory being now on the side of England, the prince commanded his men-at-arms to take horse, seeing the moment was come to advance. They mounted, and prepared to charge accordingly, the prince himself giving the word, « Advance banners, in the name of God and Saint George!» Upon seeing the approach of this strong body, those French lords who commanded the second division, and had charge of the three younger princes of France, retreated from the battle, in order, as they afterwards alleged, to place these royal persons in safety. The army of the French was now in such confusion that the third division was exposed to the full fury of the English assault, by the retreat of the second line, and the person of King John, who

commanded it, was placed in the greatest danger; his nobles, who fought around him, were almost all slain or taken, and the victors, who disputed with each other the glory and advantage of taking so great a prince alive, called out, « Yield you, sir, or you die! » The gallant monarch disdained the safety which was to be found by complying with these invitations, and continued manfully to defend himself with his battle-axe. « If, » says Froissart, « the knights of King John had fought as resolutely as he did himself, the event of the day might have been different. »

Finding himself left almost alone, and overborne by numbers, the unfortunate king expressed a wish to surrender to his cousin, the Prince of Wales; but, as this was impossible,—for the prince was in a distant part of the field,—King John gave his gauntlet in token of surrender to Sir Dennis Morbeque, a Frenchman by birth, but who, exiled from France for a homicide there committed, was in the Black Prince's service. From this gentleman King John was soon after taken forcibly by several knights of England and Gascony, who disputed the prize with so much violence, that the captive monarch was only delivered from the tumult, and even the personal danger which it involved, by the Earl of Warwick and Lord Cobham, sent by the Prince of Wales to save him amid the general disorder. Philip of France, youngest son of King John, remained captive with his father. He behaved so resolutely on that fatal day, that he

was said to have then acquired the epithet of the Hardy, by which he was afterwards distinguished.

The Prince of Wales, whose courtesy was at least equal to his bravery, caused a banquet to be spread in his pavilion, where he entertained the captive monarch, with his great nobles, while he himself refused to sit down at the table, as not worthy of so great an honour as to eat with the King of France. He bid his royal captive, at the same time, make no heavy cheer for his misfortunes, though the fate of battle had been otherwise than he would have desired. « You shall find my father,» said he, « willing to display towards you all honour and friendship, and you shall, if you will, become such friends together as you have never hitherto been. Consider,» he added, with well-meant flattery, « though you have lost the field, you have attained the praise of being the bravest knight who has this day fought upon your side.» The unfortunate king was much affected by the courtesy of his victor, from which he experienced whatever consolation his condition admitted of.

The Prince of Wales was not less anxious to reward his friends, than by his generous conduct to soften the misfortunes of his enemies. Lord Audley, who had commenced the battle of Poictiers, had continued, as long as the action lasted, still pressing forward, without stopping to make prisoners, until at length he was nearly slain upon the spot; and he was the first object

of the prince's gratitude. Upon this noble knight the prince bestowed, with his highest commendations, a noble gift of five hundred merks of yearly revenue, which Sir James Audley received with suitable expressions of gratitude.

When he returned to his own pavilion, the noble knight sent for his brother, and some other friends, and made them bear witness that he transferred to his four faithful squires the gift which the Prince had given him, since it had been by their means and steady support, through the whole battle, that he had been able to render the services which the prince had valued so highly.

On the second day after the battle, the Black Prince marched towards Poictiers, into which a distinguished French warrior, named the Lord of Roye, had thrown himself, with a considerable body of men, which he was leading to join the French army, but which came too late for that service. Moderate, however, in his wishes to improve his victory, and chiefly desirous to secure his important prisoner, King John of France, the prince declined entering into any considerable enterprise at this time, and passed steadily on his retreat towards Bordeaux. His march was so slow, that he was at liberty to attend to the business of his army, and the details in which individuals were interested.

Among other information, the Black Prince learned the generous manner in which Lord Audley had disposed, among his four esquires,

of the splendid gift which his bounty had conferred upon him. He sent for him therefore to his presence, and requested to know wherefore he had parted with the gift of his sovereign? and whether his conduct arose from the present not being acceptable to him? Sir James Audley confessed that he had presented to his esquires the gift which his highness's bounty had conferred; but he alleged, that the fidelity of those esquires had been the means of his being able to execute the vow which he had made; and that, by their constant attendance through the bloody day, they had repeatedly saved his life at the imminent risk of their own. « Wherefore,» said the noble lord, « it was well my part to transfer to them that bounty which your highness designed for me, especially since, renouncing in their behalf this royal gift, I have still, God be praised! revenues sufficient to maintain my place in your highness's service. But if this should offend your highness, I am right willing that it shall be ordered according to your pleasure.»

The Black Prince joyfully accepted an apology so congenial to his feelings. He highly approved of Lord Audley's gift to his esquires, but made a point of pressing upon him an additional gift of four hundred pounds yearly more, which he required him to retain for his own use and behoof.

It was also, apparently, in this march that the Black Prince decided the important question, who was to be considered as the immediate captor of King John of France. With the same

generosity and justice which always marked the conduct of this gallant prince, Edward adjudged the glory and profit of this action to the poor French exile, Sir Dennis of Morbeque, to whom King John had given his gauntlet in token of surrender, rather than to more powerful knights and barons, who stated their claim as preferable to that of the poor banished Frenchman. I have already stated, elsewhere, that the ransom of a captive belonged to the person by whom he was taken prisoner. But the person of King John fell under an exception, which adjudged, that prisoners, whose ransom was rated at ten thousand crowns or upwards, should not belong to individuals, but to the general of the army. The prince, therefore, finally closed this affair, by secretly transferring to Dennis Morbeque the sum at which King John's ransom was rated.

After spending most of the winter at Bordeaux, the Black Prince returned to England with his prisoner, and made a solemn entrance into London, where the citizens received him with a gorgeous display of their power and wealth. In the procession which traversed the city on the occasion, King John of France appeared in royal array, mounted upon a beautiful white courser, while the Prince of Wales, avoiding the triumphant display of a victor, rode beside his captive upon a little black palfrey of an ordinary appearance. In modern times, this might be considered as an affectation of humility, and a more pointed personal triumph, than if the

prince had shown less apparent deference. But we are not to judge of the feelings of a rude age from those of a civilized one. In Edward's time, it was no uncommon display of the victor to show conquered princes to the people, loaded with irons, as in the triumphs of the ancient Romans; and the very opposite conduct of the conqueror of Poictiers, was considered as a mark of moderation and humility on the part of the conqueror, and received as such by the vanquished, and all who witnessed it.

CHAPTER VII.

Consequences to France of the Battle of Poictiers—Disputes between the Dauphin and the States-General—Suppression of an Insurrection under Sir Godfrey Harcourt, who had again revolted to the English—Siege of Rennes—Truce concluded—Capture of the Castle of Euvreux by Sir William Granville—Escape of Charles of Navarre from prison—he organizes the Faction of the Navarrois—Insolence of Marcel, Provost of Paris—Insurrection of the Peasantry, called Jacquerie—Partial Success of the Regent against the English—Treaty for the Ransom of King John—the Estates of France refuse to sanction this Treaty, and Edward again invades France—Siege of Rheims—Peace of Bretigny—Death of King John, and Accession of the Dauphin Charles.

THE battle of Poictiers, in 1356, being the disastrous consequence of that of Cressy, had been yet more calamitous than the preceding victory. For, as the combat had been chiefly fought on foot, and almost wholly by dismounted men-at-arms, a much larger portion of the French nobility had been slain than at Cressy, and the kingdom was, in a great measure, deprived of those on whose courage the defence of the country was supposed chiefly to depend. The three sons of King John, who were naturally looked to as heirs of the crown, were too young to be capable of re-

trieving so dreadful a misfortune as the defeat of Poictiers. The king had left no regent, or other legal representative; a deficiency which his son Charles, who bore the title of dauphin and Duke of Normandy, endeavoured to supply, by summoning a meeting of the Estates of the kingdom, naturally hoping, that in a period so calamitous he should find them disposed to act unanimously for obtaining the relief of King John, and restoring good order in the kingdom of France.

Unhappily, however, the members of this national body were strongly tempted to avail themselves of a favourable opportunity for depressing the royal power, and raising their own, rather than to combine in a joint effort for extricating the nation from its difficulties.

One principal cause of the general discontent and disorder, was the intrigues and conspiracies of the King of Navarre, who at this period might be justly termed the Evil Genius of France. It is here for an instant necessary to resume his history between 1354 and the battle of Poictiers. We have mentioned, that, at the former period, by the solemn farce of a submission and pardon, a reconciliation had been patched up betwixt him and King John. Charles of Navarre felt more resentment at the harsh manner of his trial, than gratitude for the easy terms of his pardon. He seems also to have been deeply imbued with that love of mischief for mischief's sake, which is in some a symptom of a tendency to insanity. He organized new conspiracies, into which he

seduced even the heir of the crown, whom he persuaded that he was not sufficiently intrusted with power by his father. John, however, detected the plot of this wicked prince, and having a full explanation with the dauphin, prevailed on him to desert the pernicious faction with which he had engaged. The king, by the dauphin's personal assistance, next seized upon the person of the King of Navarre, and threw him into prison, where he remained till after the battle of Poictiers. The Count of Harcourt, brother of Sir Godfrey, was executed, among other adherents of the King of Navarre, upon the apprehension of their leader.

But when the field of Poictiers was lost, it was not the least, amidst the various calamities of that disastrous period, that the spirit of Charles of Navarre influenced the deliberations of the States-General, although his person was confined in the Castle of Creve-Cœur. The States made it soon evident that they were less bent on the restoration of the king to his subjects, than upon the degradation of the crown and engrossing the sovereign power within their own body. They divided themselves into separate committees, for executing various branches of the public service, hitherto transacted by the King's ministers, and transmitted several lofty demands to the dauphin, requiring the punishment of certain officers of state, of whom they complained, a general change of the king's ministry, the deliverance from prison of the king of Navarre, and the

subjection of the dauphin's government to the predominating influence of a committee of thirty-six of the members of the States-General, in which it was proposed to vest the powers of their whole body.

The dauphin Charles, embarrassed by the engrossing and grasping spirit displayed by the assembly from whom he had expected assistance, endeavoured to evade demands which he could not have granted without great hazard to the crown of which he was heir, and disrespect towards his father, who, although a prisoner in England, was still its owner. He dissolved the States, in spite of the remonstrances of the citizens of Paris, who, headed by Marcel, the provost of the merchants, and Ronsac, the sheriff, declared violently in favour of the assembly of representatives, and insisted upon their being reinstated in their authority.

While these intestine divisions were proceeding with violence in the metropolis, war was laying waste the more distant provinces of the kingdom of France. The celebrated Duke of Lancaster was in arms in Normandy, and in his company Lord Godfrey of Harcourt, whose name we have frequently had occasion to allude to. He had, as we have already mentioned, submitted to King John, after the battle of Cressy; but, incensed by the death of his brother, John, Count Harcourt, he had again revolted to the English interest, and, having joined the Duke of Lancaster, was appointed his lieutenant.

One slender ray of light alone remained. Ere the States were dissolved, they had granted some supplies, enabling the Duke of Normandy to levy a small army to suppress this internal enemy in the province where he claimed an especial personal interest. By the judicious use of these supplies, a valiant French knight, Sir Robert Clermont, with about three hundred men-at-arms, and a sufficient body of infantry, marched against Sir Godfrey Harcourt, whom he speedily met with. The troops which that eminent malecontent commanded, were chiefly revolted Frenchmen, like himself, but of no great reputatiou in arms. Part of his troops consisted of a body of archers, who operated with little effect on the French men-at-arms, who covered themselves under their bucklers, and when the quivers of their enemy were expended, advanced to close quarters. The men of Sir Godfrey Harcourt then shrunk from the attack; but their general continued fighting with courage worthy his reputation. Seeing, however, that escape was impossible, he took his resolution to die like a man. Being slightly lame, he placed himself so as, by the inequality of the ground, to supply in some degree the deficiency of his limbs, and wielding an axe of great weight (for he was very strong in the arms), he dealt such furious blows, that for a time no one dared approach him. At length, after he had thus valiantly defended himself against all who attacked him on foot, two French knights mount-

ing their horses, charged him at the gallop, and bore him to the earth with their spears, where he was slain by the infantry who crowded around him. Thus died Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, paying at length the penalty frequently attending those who have been the means of plunging their country into the evils of civil war. This battle was fought near Coutances, about November, 1356.

Shortly afterwards, the Duke of Lancaster, in revenge of the death of Sir Godfrey Harcourt, besieged Rennes very closely, pressed it hard, and threatened, by the taking of that city, to complete the separation of Bretagne from the French kingdom. Lord Charles of Blois, who continued his efforts to possess himself of the county of Bretagne, urged the dauphin strongly to assist him with soldiers; but the dauphin had other work upon his hands, for the dissolution of the States-General had then cast every thing into disorder.

A truce was, however, made, at the earnest intercession of two cardinals of the church. It afforded a moment's breathing-time to the unhappy kingdom of France, and obliged the Duke of Lancaster to raise the siege of Rennes, which was on the point of surrender. But the evils of France were so great that this partial relief was scarcely felt, in fact, the confusion and general discontent in that kingdom broke out in such numerous and dreadful forms, that, to understand them, it is necessary to consider them separately;

and, without minutely attending to the order in which the events happened, we may observe, that they were, each and all, the portentous consequences of general confusion and discord, of the absence and captivity of the king, the mutiny of the common people, and the disposition of all ranks to violence and spoil.

The first great evil was the progress of the English war, which, although not violently pursued by King Edward, was yet followed up by his captains in Bretagne, Normandy, and Gascony. The manner in which such enterprises were carried on, may be well illustrated by the successful attack of William of Granville upon the strong town and castle of Euvreux. This nobleman dwelt about two leagues from that town, and often visited it. He was privately attached to Philip of Navarre, younger brother of Charles the Bad, who served with the English host, commanded by the Duke of Lancaster. But the Lord of Granville had never openly borne arms in the quarrel; no suspicion attached to him, therefore, at Euvreux, and he had the means of making a strong party among the burgesses. He came by degrees to use the open ground before the castle-gate as a place for his ordinary promenade; and as the captain sometimes went abroad for refreshment, and entered into conversation with him, they fell into a sort of familiarity.

One day, having every thing appointed to support his attempt, William of Granville began to tell an idle story to the governor concerning a

pretended attack upon England by the joint forces of the King of Denmark and the King of Ireland, who, for that purpose, had, he said, taken the sea with a numerous host. When the Frenchman demanded from whence he had this intelligence, William of Granville replied, that a knight of Flanders had sent the news to him, and with it a set of chessmen, the most beautiful he had ever seen. This excited the curiosity of the seneschal of the castle, who was a great admirer of the game of chess. William of Granville, as if to gratify his curiosity, sent for the chessmen, on condition that they should play a game together. The board and men were brought; and the seneschal was so imprudent as to admit the knight within the entrance of the fortress. He was privately armed with a shirt of mail concealed under his upper clothing, and held in his hand a small battle-axe, and thus, while apparently intent on his game, stood prepared to take advantage of such opportunity as should present itself. In the meantime, his valet warned the conspirators, burgesses of the place, to hold themselves in instant readiness. In the course of the game, William of Granville seized an opportunity to dash out the captain's brains with his battle-axe, and winding a bugle-horn which he carried with him for the purpose, the burgesses ran to his assistance, and found him bestriding the body of the captain, and defending the gate, which he had occupied, against such of the garrison as hastily took the alarm. The in-

surgents speedily seconded him, and made themselves masters of Euvreux, which became a head quarter of the faction of the English, or Navarrois, in Normandy.

Such was the nature of the exploits which were then achieved in every corner of France, in which good faith and personal fidelity seem to have been little observed by either party.

It was not, however, so much the national war between the French and English which brought so much harm upon the former nation, as the violent factions among the Frenchmen themselves, which were about this time considerably augmented in number, and no less so in rancour.

I have told you more than once of the peculiar and dangerous character of Charles King of Navarre. It was the misfortune of France that this person, of so faithless a disposition, joined to qualities so showy and so popular, escaped, at this moment of the greatest confusion, from the castle of Crevecœur, in which he had been confined by King John for his former intrigues. The liberated prisoner was received with great joy, not only at Amiens, and other cities, but in Paris itself, where Marcel, the provost of the merchants, became his principal adherent.

Being an accomplished orator, Charles of Navarre harangued the Parisians in public, and with great effect on their credulity; he seemed to declare himself for a republic, or rather an aristocracy, instead of a monarchy, countenancing the

claims of the States, in opposition to those which were preferred for the crown on the part of the dauphin and others. Those who adhered to the party of Charles, or in general to that of the States, obtained the name of Navarrois. Philip of Navarre, however, though the brother of Charles, remained in the English camp; nor could he ever be prevailed on to declare in favour of a republic, in which, he said, there could never be order, honour, or stability, but a constant succession of shame and confusion.

Meantime, the dauphin was under the necessity of again assembling the States-General, in order to obtain, through their means, the power of imposing taxes, and levying money for the support of the war. The provost of the merchants thwarted the dauphin in all his projects; for, like the King of Navarre, his patron, he personally hated the dauphin, who had been once in some degree himself a Navarrois, until induced by the remonstrances of his father King John to renounce these dangerous opinions. Owing to his defection, the dauphin was mortally hated by the King of Navarre and his followers. Marcel the provost in particular mixed in all his proceedings, and caused the people, who followed him in great numbers, to assume blue hats, as a mark of their adherence to his party. The slightest offence given to any of these armed burgesses called the whole party forth; and it became absolutely impossible to maintain good order even in the capital itself, far less to make

any exertion, by levying money or otherwise, in behalf of the king, who was still a captive in England. The dauphin endeavoured to temporise, and strove, by every means in his power, to form a royal party in opposition to that of the King of Navarre. He had in some measure succeeded, when an accident threw all into irretrievable confusion.

An ordinary citizen, named Macé, had murdered Jean Baillett, the Treasurer of France, and taken refuge in a neighbouring church. The dauphin sent two mareschals, one of France, and one of Champagne, with orders to take the criminal into custody, and lead him to instant execution. The Bishop of Paris exclaimed against this act of necessary justice, as a violation of the sanctuary of the church, and the provost of the merchants called his followers into the streets, and marched with the whole mob of Paris directly to the lodgings of the dauphin, in what was then called the Palace of Justice. Entering furiously, and without reverence, into the presence of the dauphin, Marcel seized upon the two mareschals, and put them to death, so close to the prince, that he was covered with their blood. « How now, sirs, » said the dauphin, apprehensive of farther violence, « would you shed the blood royal of France! » Marcel answered in the negative; and, to show his good intentions, he snatched rudely from the dauphin's head the embroidered hat or hood which he wore, and clapped on him in its place the blue

hat, which was the sign of the Navarrois faction. He himself, to complete his insolence, wore during the rest of the day the hat of the prince, which was of a withered rose colour. The bodies of the murdered mareschals were dragged though the streets, and the King of Navarre, who had avoided being present in the city during the insurrection, endeavoured to take advantage of the incident, so as to further his own plans, by the most extravagant demands, which he founded upon it. The dauphin, however, was received as regent by the states, to whom the Navarrois had proposed to dethrone the king, and dispossess the dauphin. Thus fortified at least with nominal authority, the prince withdrew from the metropolis and its turbulent citizens, to the counties of Picardy and Champagne, where he assembled the states of those provinces, and received such succours and obedience as they had the means of yielding to him. All France was thus shaken to its centre with internal discord, and its disasters seemed past the possibility of increase, when two circumstances, both of a most alarming kind, carried the general misery to a height hitherto unknown, and even blunted the feelings of the public to the wretchedness which they had hitherto undergone.

We have already mentioned the bands of mercenary leaders, who acknowledged no officer or superior but those who promised to procure them the greatest share of plunder. These troops, or at least their leaders, were generally

English; and although they made no great distinction of political principle, they were chiefly followers of the Navarre party, as that which promised them the widest privilege of plunder. By means of these Companions, as they were called, Charles of Navarre proposed to carry into effect his dream of a republic, or rather a species of oligarchy, in which, doubtless, he proposed that he himself should act the principal part. For this purpose, he drew to his party as many of the leaders of the Companions as he possibly could, and prepared by their means to lay waste the kingdom of France.

Neither was the dauphin backward in his attempts to reduce the kingdom to subjection; for, as we shall presently see, a second great and overpowering calamity, namely, the insurrection of the peasantry, was, in its consequences, the means of strengthening and increasing the army which he assembled. This *Jacquerie*, or war of the peasants, so called, because the gentry gave to them the contemptuous name of *Jacques Bonhomme*, or Goodman James, was the most dreadful scourge which had yet ravaged France; it is impossible to conceive, and it would be indecent and disgusting to attempt to describe, its horrors. It arose from the series of oppression, scorn, and injury, which the peasants, or cultivators of the soil, had so long sustained at the hands of the nobility and gentry. These last saw in the peasantry creatures whom they deemed of an inferior species to themselves, and whose pro-

perty and persons they held alike at their disposal. What little protection the common people had received from the crown was now at an end, by the king's captivity, and the general confusion throughout the kingdom. In these sad days, each noble or knight became the uncontrolled feudal tyrant of the estate which belonged to him; and most of them were induced, by the intoxication attending the possession of arbitrary power, to make a harsh and tyrannical use of their privileges, each practising on his vassals the most unlimited oppression. The effects of such absolute power terminated in the grossest abuses, and at length drove to utter despair the peasantry, who were themselves starving, while, as an insult to their misery, they saw their lords revelling in the excess of luxury and ill-timed extravagance. After witnessing the evils of the country proceed from bad to worse, the peasantry at length became desperate, and seizing such rustic arms as pitchforks, scythes, clubs, and reaping-hooks, they rose with fury, and joined together in large bodies, resolving to destroy all the nobility and gentry in the kingdom.

This insurrection took place in several provinces; and, as is usually the case in a war of such a description, where an oppressed and ignorant people burst suddenly from their bondage, and revel in every license which ignorance and revenge can suggest to them, they burnt or pulled down the houses of the nobility, stormed their castles by main force, misused their wives

and daughters, put them to various modes of death, equally cruel and protracted, and in short behaved like fierce ban-dogs, suddenly unloosed from their chain, and equally incapable of judgment and of humanity. There was one instance, and not a solitary one, where this furious rabble roasted a noble, whose castle they had stormed, alive on a spit, and compelled his wife and children to partake of his flesh. We willingly leave these horrors in oblivion, only remarking, that it is a double curse of slavery and oppression, that for a time it renders its victims, after they succeed in breaking their bonds, incapable of thinking like human beings.

The horrors of this servile war had this good effect, that it impelled all men to join in putting a stop to so aggravated an evil. The nobility, however, who made the use of arms their sole profession, soon united together for mutual defence, and, completely armed as they were, found no difficulty in defeating the frantic peasants, though with the most unequal numbers.

An instance is given by Froissart of an interesting nature. The Duchess of Normandy, the Duchess of Orleans, and nearly three hundred other ladies of quality, young damsels, and children of the nobility, had taken refuge in the town of Meaux, where they hoped to be defended against the fury of the Jacquerie. Here they were beset by about nine or ten thousand of the insurgents; and it became too apparent that the rabble of the town were to take part with the

peasantry, and admit them into the place without opposition. The Count of Foix and the Captal of Buche, chanced to pass near the town where the ladies were enclosed by such numbers, and heard an account of their imminent peril, and of the multitude of savage clowns by whom they were surrounded. The knights were of different political principles. The earl was French both in birth and opinions; the Captal of Buche, so called from a district in Gascony, of which he was governor, was distinguished by his valour in the service of Edward III, being the same who led the successful ambuscade at the battle of Poictiers. Both, without regarding their difference in other particulars, were alike disposed to show themselves good knights, and put their persons in risk for the safety of so many noble ladies, who were destined to death and infamy by a furious rabble. The armed attendants of the knights might be sixty lances, probably making, with all their retainers, about three or four hundred men.

At the head of this very inferior force, the Count of Foix, and the Captal of Buche, rode straight to Meaux, where the ladies were still protected in a citadel, or fortified quarter of the town, although the inhabitants had admitted the ruffian mob into the market-place and streets of the city. The two valiant knights arrived just in time to prevent the females from falling into the cruel hands of their outrageous enemies. They lowered their lances, and rushed into the

market-place, then full of the disorderly rabble, who were ill able to endure an attack so furious. They were borne out of the town at the spear's point, broken, beaten down, and pursued for miles. Historians assure us, that seven thousand of the peasants were slain, which is not impossible, considering that their antagonists were so fully armed as almost to be invulnerable, while their opponents were entirely defenceless. The knights returned in triumph, and burnt a part of the town of Meaux, to revenge themselves on the inhabitants who had admitted the peasants within the walls. The warriors who (though personal and national enemies) had acted with so much gallantry in behalf of the distressed females, were applauded, and generally imitated. Other battles, like that of Meaux, took place in France, in different places, and the Jacquerie, which had raged so horribly, was finally suppressed.

As I have before hinted, the horrors of this insurrection of the peasantry obliged the nobles to unite themselves together, and rendered them more obedient to the command of their natural chiefs. Their campaign, it may be believed, was a bloody one, since they gave no quarter, but hanged, upon the next tree, such insurgents as fell into their hands. Though a sharp remedy, it proved a sure one, and this rebellion was at length stifled in the blood of the unfortunate peasants. The regent, or the dauphin, was thus enabled to place himself at the head of an army

of thirty thousand men, raised for the service of subjecting the Jacquerie, but at the head of which he speedily took an opportunity to blockade the rebellious town of Paris, of which he earnestly desired to render himself master. He hoped for success the rather that he had a party also within the town secretly attached to him, though not strong enough openly to contend with the faction led by the provost of the merchants.

The King of Navarre, on the other side, brought together a strong body of the bands of Companions of whom I have before spoken, and encamped at St Denis, in order to take such opportunity as might offer to support the Provost Marcel, and the Parisians of the Navarre faction. The provost, in the meantime, became satisfied that matters could not remain long in this uncertainty, and resolved to admit the King of Navarre and his forces into the city, in order to enable him to continue a resistance to the dauphin, to which he began to feel his own influence was not equal. He communicated, therefore, to the chiefs lying at St Denis, the scheme he had formed, and directed them to approach the gates of St Antoine and St Honoré, at twelve o'clock the ensuing night, with a choice body of forces, whom he proposed to admit into Paris.

It happened, however, that two citizens, heads of the opposite, or regent's party, called John and Symon Maillart, having some suspicions of what was going on, apprehended the provost about midnight, at the gate of St Antoine, having

the keys of the city in his hands. They instantly charged him with treachery, and slew him upon the spot. Thus died Marcel; and his party, having been detected in so disloyal an enterprise, fell into public discredit, and was dispersed. The immediate effect of these events was, that the dauphin, on the one part, entered Paris in triumph, and the King of Navarre, on the other, declared war formally against the whole kingdom of France.

This defiance he carried into execution, by means of the bands of Companions who, as we have intimated, were in possession of many strong places in different parts of France, from whence they made unexpected sallies and long marches, by which they took castles which were thought in absolute security, and pillaged defenceless villages when they least thought of danger. The prisoners which these adventurers made on such occasions, were ransomed for large sums of money; and those who could not, or would not, pay these exactions, were put to death without mercy.

Providence, however, had not entirely deserted France, and even out of the extremity of disorder and confusion, divine wisdom wrought means of recovery. It was observed, that the English commanders began gradually to lose the superior good fortune which had attended their banners.

Sir Eustace d'Ambreticour, one of the bravest of the commanders of the Companions, in the

service of England, held at least twelve good fortresses under his command, in different parts of the country, and had at his disposal upwards of seven hundred combatants. He was nevertheless defeated and made prisoner, chiefly by means of another leader of a free company like his own, called Broquart of Fenestrages, who, on this occasion, was engaged on the part of the French. In other places, also, the dauphin had partial successes, which gradually restored the spirits of the French faction.

Still they suffered severely by this mode of warfare, as appears from the expedition of another celebrated Captain of Companions, called Sir Robert Knolles. This leader was an Englishman born, of low birth and mean estimation; but he distinguished himself by his military talents as a leader of a Free Company. He passed from Bretagne to the river Loire, wasting, burning, and ravaging the country, with the avowed purpose of marching to Avignon, where the Pope then resided, and forcing the Holy Father and his cardinals to ransom themselves at a high price. The presence of a considerable French army induced him to alter this intention. He offered them battle, which they declined, and gave them the slip, when they expected to have surrounded him. Sir Robert Knolles acquired by this expedition, and other plundering excursions, the wealth of an earl, and many lands, which he surrendered to King Edward, stipulating only for his own free pardon. But we may

here quit the account of these occurrences, with the general observation, that the existence of these independent companies of adventurers long continued one of the most rankling grievances of the age. In the meantime, the restoration of peace between the nations did not advance, although France suffered so much, and England gained so little, by the continuance of the war.

The unfortunate King John of France, of whom we have lately had occasion to speak but little, appears, after his defeat and captivity at Poictiers, to have been in a great measure forgotten by his subjects, although the duty of vassals to pay the ransom of their lord when prisoner, was one of the most sacred obligations of chivalry. Finding himself abandoned to his own exertions, he endeavoured to accommodate his differences with Edward. By an agreement entered into with this prince, King John engaged to surrender Aquitaine, Gascony, Calais, and other fiefs, which Edward and his successors were to hold free of homage, or feudal fealty of any kind. The King of France became farther bound to pay four millions of gold crowns in ransom for himself and the other prisoners taken at Poictiers. King Edward, on the other hand, in consideration of this treaty, agreed to renounce all claim to the title of King of France, as well as all property in Normandy, and the other provinces not expressly ceded to him by the present articles.

Such were the terms on which King John

would have been satisfied to close the war, and to obtain his liberty. King Edward gave his assent to them, as comprehending all he expected to gain by the events of the war, for he must have despaired of all hope of conquering France. But the consent of the Estates-General was essential to the validity of the treaty. This great body, representing the French nation, positively refused to accede to terms by which so great a portion of the kingdom should be surrendered to the English. The consequence was, that the preparations for war were resumed with great animosity on both sides. The King of England, on his part, renewed his preparations, and assembled an army of no less than a hundred thousand men. A truce had been made, which was prolonged till midsummer 1359, so that it was the end of the harvest ere Edward III, with this large army, arrived at Calais.

In the meantime, the news that Edward was about to renew the war with a view of absolute conquest, had no small influence on the Navarrois party, and even on Charles himself, who became sensible, of a sudden, that any success on Edward's part would bring upon him, in the person of the King of England, a competitor more formidable than he had yet found in the lawful regent. He, therefore, to the surprise of all men, renounced, at least for a time, the factious principles which had hitherto guided him in his intercouse with the dauphin, and made a peace with that prince upon very reasonable and

equitable conditions. Philip, the brother of the King of Navarre, continued to act under the influence of England, and declared, that in making so ill-timed a peace, his brother Charles must have been acting under the influence of witchcraft; indeed, the adoption of moderate or pacific views was, on his part, widely out of character.

Edward III, in the meantime, commenced his march, and, traversing in great order the provinces of Artois and Picardy, he laid siege to the ancient city of Rheims, and it was said that he designed to have himself crowned there, according to the ancient custom of the kings of France. But the city was gallantly defended. The archbishop encouraged the citizens to stand on their defence, and many noblemen with their followers were also in the place. During this siege, which lasted for three months, the King of Navarre relapsed afresh into his usual perverse politics, and, on some slight pretext, again broke out into war with the dauphin; but whatever advantage Edward received from the conduct of this versatile prince, he lost by the rebellion of the Flemings, whom the intrigues of France again diverted to the interest of that country.

In 1360, Edward found himself obliged to abandon the siege of Rheims, and drew off his army towards the capital of France—a species of insult, or menace, repeatedly used by the English during these wars, but with little real effect. The dauphin regent occupied the capital at the head

of a numerous army; but, as on the one hand that prince declined to put the fate of the country upon the dubious issue of another battle, which might in its event have resembled that of Cressy or Poictiers, so, on the other hand, the King of England was too prudent to attempt the assault of a large city garrisoned by a numerous army. King Edward therefore thought it expedient to retreat towards Bretagne to recruit his forces, while the regent and his council, deeply affected by the scene of desolation which France presented on all sides, saw the necessity of submitting to sue for a peace, however disadvantageous. The King of England was still averse to relinquish his high pretensions to the crown of France, and it is said that an intervening thunder-storm, or hurricane, which he considered as a special sign of the displeasure of Heaven against those princes who should prolong the war, first bent his stubborn spirit to accept of peace.

But in fact, the successes of Edward had been bought at a price which even the wealth of England could not pay; and besides exhausting his finances, the events of the late campaign had plainly showed him what he could, and what he could not do. He could march through France without opposition, but this was not subjecting it to his sovereignty; and a solitary city like Rheims was, if determined on resistance, sufficient to arrest his progress. The issue of the Scottish wars may have taught this great warrior the difference between overrunning a country and

subjugating it; and the readiness with which a poor and small nation vindicated its independence, might teach him the impossibility of subduing France, so much more populous and wealthy than Scotland—if, like her, she was determined to defend her liberty—and that such was her resolution, the siege of Rheims made manifest. The conqueror was therefore taught to prefer the possession of Gascony in complete sovereignty, out of which in time a permanent possession might be formed, to a protracted war, in the vain hope that any subsequent victory could do more than those of Cressy or Poictiers.

Edward, therefore, instead of persevering in his attempt to conquer the kingdom of France, determined to remain for the present satisfied with possessing Gascony, that portion of it which was ceded to him in full sovereignty. He should thus, he hoped, secure one compact and permanent possession, while he had free access to invade France by means of Calais, and was thus ready to avail himself of such opportunities of farther conquest as might arise.

Still farther to secure his dominions in Gascony, the King of England erected them into a principality, created the Black Prince his lieutenant and representative there, confident that, by the courage and wisdom which his son had so often displayed, he could not in any way provide so well for their government and safety.

The articles of peace were, of course, favourable to England, to whom the King of France

relinquished, in full superiority, the provinces of Gascony, with various other dependencies in Aquitaine; and in the north of France, the town of Calais and earldom of Guines. In exchange King Edward renounced all title to the crown and kingdom of France, and all claims to Normandy, Touraine, Anjou, and Maine.

Upon these conditions the peace of Bretigny was founded (A. D. 1360, Oct. 24), which was most acceptable to the subjects of both crowns, though not agreeable in all respects to either of thekings themselves. Difficulties arose concerning the surrender of some part of the territory and castles yielded to the English; and the high-spirited noblemen who there held fiefs, did not understand being transferred, like a flock of sheep, from the allegiance of one sovereign to another. Many Gascon knights refused to exchange the sovereignty of France for that of England. France, they said, might herself dispense with their faith and homage, but she had no right to substitute a strange king in her place. These difficulties suspended the benefits expected from the peace. The Dukes of Anjou and Berri, with the Dukes of Orleans and of Bourbon, still remained hostages in England, for payment of the ransom stipulated for the prisoners of Poictiers. These princes obtained, on their solicitation, permission to pass to Calais, under pretence that they might be able to furnish the means of concluding the disputed points of the treaty. Instead of doing so, the Duke of

Anjou took the opportunity of abusing this indulgence, and made his escape into France.

King John had been set at liberty when he first came to an understanding with Edward, and had returned to France accordingly. But he was deeply hurt and offended at what he considered the dishonourable conduct of his son, and took the generous resolution of restoring to the English their full security for the ransom, by surrendering his own person once more into their hands. To such of his councillors as would have cautioned him against this step, he firmly replied, that, « if faith and loyalty were banished from the rest of the world, they ought still to remain enshrined in the hearts of kings.»

The generous feeling expressed in this noble sentiment, seems to show that John of France deserved better fortune than that which had followed him during his own life, and now accompanied him to the grave. A very short time after his return to England, John was seized with an indisposition, of which he died in the Savoy (A.D. 1364, April 8); and his son Charles, who had undergone so many difficulties as regent, now mounted the throne in the capacity of king, carrying with him to that eminence all the experience which many years of difficulty and misfortune had enabled him to attain, and which has procured for him in French annals the well-deserved epithet of the Wise.

CHAPTER VIII.

War in Normandy—Battle of Cocherel—War in Bretagne, between the Adherents of De Montfort and De Blois—Battle of Aurai — Financial Difficulties of Charles of France—Sumptuary Laws—Free Companions—Charles's Plan for removing them from France—their Leader Du Guesclin marches upon Avignon, and exacts a Fine from the Pope—he next engages in a war against Don Pedro the Cruel, King of Castile, and drives him from his Kingdom—Pedro solicits Assistance from the Black Prince, and is by him reinstated in his Dominions—Du Guesclin, having been taken prisoner, is ransomed—Tax upon Chimneys, called Fouage, imposed in Gascony by the Black Prince, to defray the expenses of his Castilian Expedition—Unpopularity of this Tax.

CHARLES OF FRANCE, the fifty-first monarch of that kingdom, took up the affairs of his government in an involved and confused state. The dispute concerning Bretagne was not yet determined, and disturbances continued in Normandy between the Navarrois and the French partisans, the last of which parties were headed in a great measure by a valiant Breton knight, called Bertrand du Guesclin, to whose courage France owed much during the present reign. The Navarrois, on the other hand, were commanded by the Captal of Buche, already mentioned in this

narrative. These two heroic leaders joined battle near Cocherel, in Normandy, with equal valour and skill, and the action is more particularly taken notice of on account of the merit of the leaders, and because fortune was on the side of the French, being the first action since Cressy in which that nation had been victorious. The Navarrois were completely defeated, and their stout commander, the Captal of Buche, fell into the hands of the conquerors. He was received with great distinction by King Charles, who would have bestowed upon him an earldom, had the Black Prince permitted the Captal to accept of it.

This was a fortunate commencement of King Charles's reign; but it was not without its reverse in Bretagne. King Charles of France had sent the aid of a thousand lances to Sir Charles de Blois, in order to strengthen his party in Bretagne, while Edward had dispatched the Lord Chandos with an equal number, to support the cause of the Earl de Montfort, son of John de Montfort, and of his heroic countess, remarkable for her defence of Hennebon. These inveterate enemies, De Blois and De Montfort, finally encountered each other near the town of Aurai. Friends on both sides endeavoured to accommodate the matter betwixt the contending nobles, but in vain; each declaring himself resolved to peril their long-depending and long-disputed claims upon the event of that day. They approached each other with slowness and caution,

calculated to give an idea of the desperate resolution which each had adopted, to fight this long-protracted quarrel concerning the sovereignty of Bretagne, for the last time, and to the last extremity.

Chandos, who had the chief command of the army of the Count de Montfort, divided his forces into three battalions, allotting to Sir Hugh Calverley, an English knight of great renown, the command of the rear-guard, or rather the reserve. This valiant champion, who was a man of distinguished courage, remonstrated against this arrangement, as it was his wish to fight in the front of the battle. The Lord Chandos explained his order of battle, by assuring him that either Sir Hugh Calverley must lead the reserve, or he must conduct it himself, and submitted to him which in that case was most proper. Sir Hugh was overcome with this gentleness and deference on the part of a leader so distinguished as Chandos, and saying, « he was sure that Chandos would put him on no task inconsistent with his honour,» acquiesced in the post allotted to him.

A little before the hour of prime, the two armies approached each other. The French came on in fair array, « in such close order,» says Froissart, « that, had one thrown an apple among the battalion, it must have lighted upon a helmet or a head-piece.» They were also covered with strong and large targets, to parry the shot of the English archers. Accordingly, advancing among the bowmen, without having endured the usual

damage from their arrows, the French laid about among them, with the axes which they had prepared for close fight. The archers, on the other hand, being strong and active men, threw themselves among the French, and casting down their bows, and wrenching the axes from the hands of their enemies, made a defence with singular, though unavailing fury. The leaders on all sides fought most valiantly, and Chandos, with an axe in his hand, set an example to all the field. Sir Hugh Calverley well supported the place intrusted to him, and by his bringing up the reserve with undaunted valour, and in a moment of extreme need, vindicated the prudence of Lord Chandos, who assigned to him so important a command, and finally decided the fate of the day. Sir Charles de Blois was slain on the field, for whom his adversary, De Montfort, shed many tears, generously lamenting the fate of a gallant enemy. Bertrand du Guesclin also was made prisoner; thus deprived of their principal leaders, the French party were totally discomfited.

This battle ended the hostilities of Bretagne, which had now lasted for so many years; but the faction of Edward III, who had so long supported the war, derived little advantage from its conclusion. It had been decided by the peace of Bretigny, that the King of England should lay no claim to the superiority of Bretagne, in whatever manner the dispute between De Montfort and Charles de Blois might be terminated. The

duchy alone was adjudged, by the event of this battle of Aurai, to the young Count de Montfort, who obtained, for his behaviour in the action, the envied title of the Valiant. The King of France received the young victor, to do homage as Duke of Bretagne, while he settled large and liberal appointments upon the lady of the deceased Charles de Blois.

The difficulty of finding the means of bearing the various expenses of the kingdom embarrassed King Charles greatly, and drove him to a course of raising funds, which, in the nature of things, could not be very popular. This was a general resumption of those gifts which the king and his predecessors had made, as well to the great vassals of the crown, as to inferior subjects. In the course of this delicate task, Charles, by his wisdom and oratory, made such an impression upon his uncle, Philip of Orleans, as to prevail on that high prince of the blood, to resign all that he possessed by the favour of his father, brothers, and nephew, saying, « that although he conceived he had a legitimate right to the donations of the crown, yet he resigned them all at the pleasure of the king, his nephew, knowing that the service of the state rendered them necessary to him.» Moved by so eminent and generous an example, others taking the same course of submission, given by a prince so near the crown, acquiesced also in the recall of such crown gifts as they held, while the king partly accepted the benefits which they surrendered,

and partly returned them to the persons by whom they had been abandoned to his pleasure. These last were so sensible of the extremity to which the crown was reduced, that perhaps a measure of state necessarily obnoxious in itself, and severe upon individuals, was never carried into execution with so little unpopularity to the sovereign.

The king also made many laws against luxury in entertainments, festivals, and apparel; and by strictly acting up to his own regulations, produced a considerable reform in the expenses of the great, which were a constant source of envy and odium to the poor. He was regular and steady in the execution of justice, and, so far as he could, active in enforcing the judgments which he pronounced; but the state of the country, overrun by bands of soldiers, who acknowledged no sovereign, rendered his efforts to restore order for a long time, and in many instances, unavailing.

These associations of military adventurers, which, when they reached to a certain extent of numbers, were called the « Great Companies,» continued an abiding, and apparently incurable national evil. The King of France found himself, from the state of his finances, totally unprepared to clear the country of these land-pirates, as they might be properly termed, by whom it was inundated. In his distress, he applied to Edward III, who, by an article in the treaty of Bretigny, had bound himself to lend his assist-

ance, if required, in relieving France of these military locusts. Edward, thus cited to fulfil his engagement, sent forth a proclamation, commanding these companies to lay down their arms, and evacuate the territory of France. Some few obeyed, but the others treated his proclamation with contempt, saying they held no land of him, owed him no allegiance, and would not disband their forces at the bidding of any king upon earth. The fiery Edward resolved instantly to march against them with an army; but Charles, not desirous to afford a pretext for the re-entrance of English troops into France, returned for answer, that he disapproved of the mode of proceeding proposed by his brother of England, and meant to rid himself of the Great Companies by another expedient. The King of England indignantly replied, « that in that case he must trust to his own strength, for he could expect no assistance from him.»

King Charles, justly called the Wise, had, in fact, devised an expedient for ridding France of the wasting plague occasioned by these Companies, without the hazardous experiment either of engaging in war with them, or of seeking relief from an army of English, commanded by the Black Prince, or his father.

His purpose was to hold out to these adventurers a more distant field of war, which should afford them a prospect of the wealth which they coveted, while their departure would relieve France of their burdensome presence. A large

body was, accordingly, prevailed upon to prosecute their trade of arms in the Italian wars, where their commander, Hawkwood, an Englishman, originally of low rank, rose to wealth and eminence.

But the King of France pursued the same policy on a larger scale. Bertrand du Guesclin, renowned for his valour, and personally acquainted with the leading chiefs of the Companies, was instructed to deal with them, for the purpose of engaging them in a distant expedition. He was at this time a prisoner to John Chandos, having been taken, as we mentioned, at the battle of Aurai.

But the King of France, the Pope, and other princes, who saw the necessity of Guesclin's agency in this plan, mediated betwixt him and Chandos, made personal contributions to pay the heavy ransom at which his freedom was rated, and thus restored him to liberty. The influence of this renowned warrior engaged thirty-five of the principal chiefs of the Companies, in what was at first represented to be an expedition against the Moors in Spain, and in so far a species of crusade. He induced them to join in such an enterprise the more readily that he himself proposed to accompany them, and accepted the chief command. The King of France readily gave his consent and approbation to this apparently Holy War, and presented those concerned in it with two hundred thousand francs to assist them in their march, caring but little, it well may

be supposed, whither their road might lead them, provided it carried them out of the realm of France. The companies assembled according to their agreement at Chalons, upon the river Marne, and from thence took a route towards Avignon, then the habitation of the Pope. His holiness, much alarmed at the approach of an army so composed, sent a cardinal to meet them, to demand what troops they were, and with what purpose they came. Du Guesclin answered with gravity, that they were sinful men who had taken the cross against the infidels, and were marching against the Moors, and that they approached the footstool of the Pope to request absolution for their sins, and a sum of two hundred thousand florins, by way of alms, to enable them to proceed upon their pious undertaking. The absolution was promised by the cardinal without any delay or scruple; but there went more words to payment of the money. The Pope would fain have satisfied these sturdy beggars with one hundred thousand florins, raised by a tax upon the inhabitants of Avignon; but this did not suit Du Guesclin's policy. «We came not,» said he, «to pillage the poor, but to receive alms from the rich; the full subsidy must be paid by the Pope and his college of cardinals, who have plenty of money, and the taxes must be remitted to the poor inhabitants of Avignon.» The Pope was under the necessity of complying with this unceremonious request, liberally adding to the subsidy the par-

don about which these robbers affected to be solicitous.

Bertrand du Guesclin, and such captains of the Companions as he trusted with his secret purpose, had an expedition in view very different from that of an attack upon the infidels. There reigned at this time in Castile, one of the principal Christian kingdoms of Spain, Don Pedro, called, for his inhumanity and tyranny, the Cruel. He had murdered his beautiful and youthful bride, a near relation of the King of France, and, besides innumerable other cruelties, had threatened the life of two or three brethren by the father's side, and particularly one of them, Henry Count of Transtamara, who stood high in the esteem of the world, and was supposed to head the numerous party of Castilians whom Pedro's cruelties had rendered malecontent. The Castilian monarch had also in several ways offended the Church, whereby he had incurred a sentence of excommunication, and it appeared to the Pope, it seems, highly fitting and convenient that this motley army, formed out of the refuse of all nations, should be the executors of his holy purpose.

Without embarrassing ourselves with the minute particulars of the expedition, it is sufficient to say that Bertrand du Guesclin and his army easily dispossessed Pedro of the crown which his vices had rendered very insecure, and compelled him to fly to Corunna.

Reduced to this extremity, Pedro took the resolution of going from Corunna to Gascony in person, and soliciting as a suppliant the formidable alliance of the Black Prince of Wales, whose residence was fixed at Bordeaux, from which capital he governed, as his father's lieutenant, all those beautiful provinces which had been ceded to England at the peace of Bretigny.

Pedro's story was that of a lawful monarch dethroned and driven from his dominions by his bastard brother. He therefore presented himself as an unfortunate prince, entitled to the support of all those of his own rank; and his desolate condition naturally moved the heart of the noble Edward, who deemed it his duty as a true knight to extend his powerful protection to a distressed monarch craving succour at his hands.

There was, however, to be considered the deficiency of numbers, and the necessity of being at great expense, if the Black Prince should embrace the cause of the fugitive. All this was pointed out to him by his faithful councillors, who urged him to consider the crimes of Don Pedro, and also the great charges which must necessarily be encountered, if he would needs succour him. They implored the Prince of Wales that he would at least wait until he saw what cost his father was willing to bestow upon such an expedition; and they failed not to show him, what he afterwards felt to be true by bitter experience, that should he, by assisting Don Pedro, lay himself under the necessity of taxing the

inhabitants of Gascony, he must lay his account with losing their regard and allegiance. These arguments weighed nothing with the Black Prince, impressed as he was with the justice of Don Pedro's cause, and lending an ear as he did to the treacherous promises of that tyrant, who readily engaged to find treasure, provisions, and whatever was demanded. Edward assembled, therefore, a large body of feudal forces, and took the dangerous resolution of increasing it by bands of Companions, whom he received into his army. As large pay was necessarily promised to these men, many of whom were Companies which, having aided Du Guesclin in the conquest of Castile, and having assisted to dethrone King Pedro, were now equally ready to become active in his restoration, they were soon assembled in great numbers. Prince Edward set forth with a very considerable army, with which he crossed the Pyrenean mountains, and advanced on the river Ebro, to a town called Najara, or Navarette. Here Henry, chosen King of Castile, met Edward at the head of an army still larger than that of the prince, consisting partly of Spaniards, partly of those Free Companions whom Du Guesclin had brought into Spain, and who still continued under his command, to the number of four thousand men-at-arms. The battle was exceedingly furious, and fought with great bravery on each side. But the conduct and valour of the Black Prince were decidedly conspicuous; and after a victory as complete as any which he had yet won, Edward

found no difficulty in restoring his ally Pedro to a throne, of which his crimes rendered him unworthy. It was the natural and just doom of Providence, that the prince should be the first sufferer by the ingratitude of the wolfish tyrant whom he had assisted, without sufficient reference to the justice of his cause.

The payment of necessary sums of money, the furnishing of wholesome provisions, in sufficient quantities, all which had been liberally promised before the expedition, were now, since the victory of Navarette, entirely neglected by the ungrateful tyrant; and the Black Prince was at once disturbed by the murmurs of his unpaid soldiers, and distressed by the maladies which began to sweep them off in numbers. The heat of the country, to which the English constitution was not accustomed, and the use of strange and unwholesome food, not only made his men sicken and die, but sowed the seeds of an incurable disease in the frame of the gallant Prince himself. He therefore returned to Bordeaux with disappointed hopes, a diminished army, an exhausted exchequer, and a broken constitution; and it is observed by historians, that the support of the tyrant Pedro must have been unpleasing in the sight of Providence, since it was followed by so marked a change of fortune in so eminent a person as that of the Prince of Wales.

Some advantages, however, Prince Edward derived from the expedition across the Pyrenees, and he accounted it not the least of them, that

he had in his possession as prisoner the renowned Bertrand Du Guesclin, of whose courage and address it was thought the Black Prince condescended to be somewhat jealous. It is certain, that the presence of this renowned knight was accounted of such importance, that when it was desired first to engage him in the Spanish wars, the King of France, the Pope, and Henry of Transtamara, were, as we have already stated, glad to subscribe for his ransom a sum amounting to one hundred thousand francs, for at such a rate was he valued. On his second capture, when he had surrendered at Navarette to Sir John Chandos, the knight by whom he was formerly taken, it is said the Black Prince formed a determination that so formidable a leader should not again be admitted to ransom. But the wily Frenchman attained his purpose in the following manner:—Being in presence of the prince at Bordeaux, and answering some incidental questions concerning his captivity, Du Guesclin observed, it could not be unpleasing to him, since it was attended with so much glory. Edward naturally asked, in what that glory consisted? Du Guesclin replied, that the world affirmed that the Black Prince was afraid to deliver him from prison, on account of his reputation and chivalry: «too honourable a circumstance,» he said, «for a poor knight like myself.»

The prince was naturally piqued at a speech which ascribed to him a sentiment of ignoble rivalry, and was perhaps the more displeased

that he was sensible of the truth of his remark. «It is not for fear of your chivalry, sir knight, that I keep you captive,» said he, in reply; «and to show you it is not, you shall have your liberty, if you can pay for your ransom one hundred thousand francs.»

«Willingly, my lord,» replied Sir Bertrand; «and I thank your highness for the honour of rating me so high.» By recurrence to the French king, the Duke of Anjou, Henry of Transtamara, and other friends, a warrior so renowned as Du Guesclin speedily obtained his liberty, and was again restored to the wars.

I have mentioned that the Prince of Wales had imprudently embarrassed his finances by this expensive campaign in Spain; and he was now equally unfortunate in the mode which he chose of retrieving them. This was by a tax upon chimneys, called by the French, *fouage*, which, amounting to a franc upon each chimney, would, it was supposed, in five years, discharge the prince's debts, as it afforded an income of above a million of francs yearly. But the tax was new to the Gascons, who displayed a general disinclination to submit to the imposition. «When we belonged to France,» they said, «we were never grieved with such assessments; nor will we now submit to them. When we vowed fidelity to Prince Edward, he swore on his part to protect our privileges; and we will not abide by our oath, unless he keeps what he has sworn to us.» The greatest of the Gascon barons, who

had been previously engaged against their will in the expedition to Castile, caught eagerly at this new subject of offence, and combined, so soon as the opportunity should be fitting, to free themselves from the dominion of England.

The mere pressure of an unpopular tax, though that upon the chimneys seems to have been felt as a severe grievance, will hardly of itself account for a defection which proved so general. But the lieutenancy of the Black Prince had been showy and extravagant; a fault which seldom fails to provoke, on the part of the public, dissatisfaction and displeasure. Besides, amid the high qualities which few princes could boast in more perfection, the Black Prince showed flashes of his father's haughty and severe temper, which were at times unpleasant to the proud barons of Gascony, although they were obliged to endure them at the moment. They were galled especially by the bitter reflection that they were governed in some measure by the right of conquest, and that, though Frenchmen by birth, and principal contributors to the very victory of Poictiers which sealed the fate of their country, they were still a part of the great French nation, while subjected to an English governor, who was undoubtedly somewhat partial to his countrymen. The influence of patriotism was felt more and more in Gascony as new grievances arose, and many pretexts for discontent were found which would never have suggested themselves, had it not been for the influence of national feeling and national

rivalry. A crisis therefore approached which threatened the dominion of England in France, and seemed likely to destroy all the influence which Edward III and his son had acquired in the latter country by such an expenditure of blood and treasure.

CHAPTER IX.

Don Pedro of Castile taken prisoner, and assassinated by his brother Henry—Charles of France fosters the Disaffections in Gascony, and at last, claiming the rights of Lord Paramount, summons the Black Prince to Paris, to answer the Complaints of certain discontented Gascons—Mutual Preparations for War—The Earl of Pembroke wastes Poitou—he is enclosed by the French in the Village of Puyrenon, and rescued by John of Chandos—Ineffectual Attempt of Chandos to recover Saint Salvin, which had been betrayed by a Monk to the French—Skirmish at the Bridge of Lussac, in which Chandos is slain—Edward III sends an Army under his Son, John of Gaunt, to Calais—The Duke of Burgundy, Son of the King of France, marches to oppose him with a much larger force, but, not being able to draw the English from a strong position, returns to Paris—Predatory Expedition of Sir Robert Knolles—Adventure of a Knight in Knolles's Army, who, in performance of a Vow, strikes his Spear against the Gate of Paris, but, in his return through the Suburbs, is killed by a Butcher.

Two persons of great power and importance watched with anxiety the progress of discontent in Gascony, and the various embarrassments, which, like clouds arising upon the disk of a setting sun, overshadowed the latter days of the Black Prince.

One of these, though himself no sovereign

prince, possessed in the time in which he lived, enough of warlike fame and personal importance to place him upon a level with great potentates. This was Bertrand du Guesclin, so often before mentioned, who, having been a knight of no great power in Gascony, had raised himself by his military fame to the rank of a great general, the ally of kings, and disposer of crowns. This warrior having seen the change of government which he accomplished in Castile, altogether reversed by the victory at Navarette, had, after obtaining his freedom, renewed his intercourse with Henry of Transtamara, and combined measures to seize the first opportunity of accomplishing a counter-revolution. The war between the two brothers, Pedro and Henry, for the crown of Castile, was again renewed, so soon as the decayed state of Edward's health, and the embarrassment of his finances became public, and was speedily brought to a decision by the advice and assistance of Du Guesclin.

Henry took arms with a very considerable force, and joining battle with Don Pedro, who defended himself with the most desperate valour, defeated that tyrant, and compelled him to fly into the castle of Montiel, where he was instantly blockaded. The castle, though strong, was not victualled for defence; so that Don Pedro and his company, which did not exceed twelve men, were compelled to attempt a passage, by night, through the army of the besiegers. They were unsuccessful, and were made prisoners; and so

bitter was the hatred between the brethren, that Henry of Transtamara hastened in person to the lodging of the French knight who had taken Pedro prisoner, and as he entered, called out furiously, « Where is that Jewish bastard, who dares call himself King of Castile?»—« Here I am,» answered Pedro, who had no sense of fear any more than humanity. « 'T is thou thyself art a bastard, and I the lawful son of Don Alphonso.» The two brothers then engaged in mortal struggle; and Pedro, having forced Henry backward over a bench, unsheathed his poniard, and would have slain him on the spot, had not one of Henry's squires seized Pedro by the leg, and turned him undermost, giving him the disadvantage in the struggle. Henry then availed himself of the opportunity, and dispatched Pedro with his dagger; a woful instance how ambition and rivalry can subdue the warmest feelings of kindred and relationship. Thus was one great work of the Prince of Wales totally reversed and undone; and, unhappily for him, the dethronement and death of Don Pedro by no means freed him from the evils which he had brought upon himself, by espousing the cause of that tyrant.

We have said that another person besides Bertrand du Guesclin watched the progress of the discontents which agitated the English provinces in France, with the purpose of profiting by them as opportunity should present itself. This was Charles VI of France, called the Wise, and whose wisdom turned itself so much to the accumula-

tion of riches, that he was also entitled the Wealthy. He had nursed his revenue, and exerted his wisdom with the lawful and meritorious purpose of rendering himself fit to oppose the English power in France, under which his predecessors and himself had suffered so severely. The mode, however, in which he finally found it advisable to avow this intention, was a singular contradiction of his father's noble maxim, that if good faith were banished from the earth, it should at least be found in the breast of kings. If it was possible for a prince to be bound down by the direct words of a treaty, King Charles was obliged by that of Bretigny to abstain from disputing the unlimited title of England to the province of Gascony, without any badge of feudal dependence. Yet, though bound so strictly by this treaty, the King of France determined to encourage the discontented Gascon lords by assuming once more the title of Lord Paramount of that country, and by receiving an appeal to his parliament of Paris from those who claimed justice at his hands against the proceedings of the Black Prince. In vindication of his assuming a power disowned by the peace of Bretigny, the French pretended that Edward had not so absolutely renounced the title of King of France, as he was bound by the same treaty to do. The fact, however, was, that the opportunity was tempting, and Charles made use of it.

When the French king saw the moment favourable for declaring himself, he sent a clerk

and a knight, both men of gravity and eminence, to intimate to the Prince of Wales the course which he intended to pursue. These messengers found the prince at his court in Bordeaux, and kneeling before him, craved permission to deliver their message in presence of his council. «Speak on, sirs,» said the prince, little suspecting the nature of their message. The clerk then read a summons in the name of Charles, and directed to his nephew the Prince of Wales, setting forth, that various prelates, barons, knights, etc. of Gascony, had complained to the King of France of grievances sustained at the hands of the said Prince of Wales, through evil counsel, and therefore commanding him to appear in person in the city of Paris, and present himself before the King of France and his peers, to make answer to the petitions which complained of injury at his hands.

The Prince of Wales heard with no little astonishment a summons founded on the right of homage, which was expressly renounced by France at the treaty of Bretigny. His eyes sparkled with indignation, as, looking fiercely upon the French messengers, he thus replied, «Is it even so? Does our fair uncle desire to see us at Paris? Gladly will we go thither; but I assure you, sirs, it shall be with basnet on our head, and sixty thousand men in our company.» Perceiving his resentment, the messengers dropt on their knees, and reminded him, that for their part, they only did the message of him who sent

them. The prince, however, left them in indignation; and they were counselled by the English lords then present to depart as fast as they could, lest their safety should be endangered. In fact, when the news of the departure of the envoys reached the prince, he sent after and arrested them, as being, he said, the messengers of his own discontented subjects of Gascony, rather than of the King of France. They suffered, however, nothing eventually; but the prince retained his purpose of making instant war against France; while the French king, on the other hand, strengthened himself, as was usual at that period, by hiring a certain number of the Free Companions, and, secure of the assistance of the numerous malecontents in the Gascon provinces, laid aside all thoughts of peace, and prepared for a war against England, under auspices more fortunate than those under which France had lately fought.

Charles in this approaching contest had the infinite advantage of the general assent of his people, who, fired with the reviving hope of national glory and independence, pledged themselves to support, with their lives and fortunes, the quarrel with England, in which he was now about to engage. The peace, which had now lasted a considerable time, had also greatly diminished the forces at the command of Edward III and his son the Black Prince. The Free Companies, which might be considered as something corresponding to a standing army of the period, had been, owing to the want of

money, dismissed from the pay of England, and in a great measure disbanded, or sent to find employment elsewhere. The feudal troops and archery of England herself, whom it would have been difficult or impossible to detain in Gascony or France for any length of time, after the war was at an end, had returned to their native country, and it would require new efforts and new expenditure of treasure to recall them to the field when their services were most necessary.

On the other hand, the whole kingdom of France was replenished with a rising generation, who had neither experienced the terrors of the former English victories, nor felt any thing save the desire to be avenged of their invaders. Charles himself might, indeed, remember the disasters of Cressy and Poictiers; but he had at the same time the satisfaction to know that Edward III was now in an advanced old age, embarrassed, too, by the discontent of his subjects, who were unwilling to submit to farther assessments for the support of foreign war, and by the increasing indisposition of the Black Prince, whose body could no longer execute the dictates of his dauntless mind, and who had, moreover, to lament the loss of so many brave men, cut off in Spain, less by war than by wasting disease. On the whole, therefore, the King of France was prepared, with good hopes, once more to revive the bloody war which had so long wasted his kingdom. Nor did the commencement of the struggle deceive his expectations.

Yet the spirit of Prince Edward flinched not under the infirmity of his body. He purposed, as we have already hinted, to take the field in person, and advance to Paris, at the head of a numerous army. His father had again influence enough with his parliament, to obtain large subsidies, and levy a considerable army, which he dispatched to the assistance of the Prince of Wales, under the command of the Earl of Cambridge, his brother, and the gallant John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, his brother-in-law. The Black Prince received also a powerful reinforcement from the Grand Companies, who, as their trade was war, were naturally determined in their choice of a side, by their reliance on the military qualities of the commander-in-chief, for skill, valour, generosity, and success, and certainly there was no man alive who could in these respects be termed the equal of the Prince of Wales. Sir Hugh Calverley, whose deeds at the battle of Aurai have been already noticed, was devotedly attached to his native prince; and, by his interest among the Free Companions, he collected, in Spain and elsewhere, six thousand lances of this description, whom the prince, perhaps hastily, sent instantly forward to make war on the territories of such of the great Gascon barons as had set an example in revolting against the *fouage*, or tax upon chimneys, and, as Prince Edward supposed, had busied themselves in exciting King Charles to summon him before the parliament of Paris.

But although the prince was thus far armed against the impending evil, the schemes of Charles, for undermining the English power in France, were so skilfully laid, that they took effect with considerable success. The province of Ponthieu was seized upon without much opposition, an acquisition rendered easy by the intrigues carried on by the friends of France in that district. The Dukes of Anjou and Berri, brothers of the king, each at the head of a considerable army, the one levied in Auvergne, the other in Toulouse, were ready to invade the provinces of Gascony and Poitou; and for some time it was difficult to say which party obtained the ascendancy, so many were the feats of valour, skirmishes, and captures of castles, and so various was the success attending each of them.

In another species of warfare the King of France had perhaps a more decided advantage. This was in the original character of the dispute, the justice of which was warmly debated by the gownsmen and churchmen on both sides. In this King Edward revived his old claim to the kingdom of France, founded upon his denying the efficacy of the Salic law; an antiquated plea, renounced by himself at the peace of Bretigny, and which he would certainly have done better to have abandoned for ever, and limited his claim to the rights of sovereignty in Poitou and Guienne, which had been acknowledged in all formality by the King of France himself, and by the estates of that kingdom. In the former case

Edward III claimed the succession in right of his mother, which had never been acknowledged by the law of France. On the contrary, in preferring a claim of sovereignty to Gascony, and its dependencies only, King Edward would only have founded upon the terms of an existing treaty, solicited by Charles himself, while regent, and by the estates of his kingdom. Edward III, however, chose to enlarge, as much as possible, the title on which he founded, being conscious that men would regard it less with reference to its justice and validity, than to their own passions and partialities. Be that as it may, the clergy of France were generally decidedly favourable to the cause of their native sovereign; and there can be no doubt that the manner in which they recommended and enforced upon the public, the right of Charles, in the different provinces possessed by the English, had a great effect in producing the general disposition to revolt from the English to the French monarch, which was every where manifested. It was with sharper weapons, however, than words, that the cause of either king was to be finally determined, and accordingly, blood flowed freely on both sides, in every county of France where the English had any footing.

What appeared in particular to intimate the doom of heaven against the cause of England, was the death of some of those remarkable persons by whose assistance the Black Prince had

often gained his victories, but who now were, by various, and some of them insignificant actions, compared to the reputations of those to whom they happened, altogether removed from the scene, when their services would have been most advantageous to their great commander.

One of the most remarkable persons, and equally distinguished by valour and talents, was Lord James Audley, Seneschal of Poitou, who fell sick and died, while the war was at the hottest. This was the son of that Lord James Audley, whose conduct at the battle of Poictiers was so remarkable. His father was now too old for the wars, and had retired into England, where he died in 1386. The death of Lord James Audley, the younger, greatly grieved the Prince of Wales, who replaced him as Seneschal in Poitou by the celebrated John Chandos.

As this brave leader was an active partisan in that kind of warfare which distinguished the period, he proposed to the young Earl of Pembroke to join with him in an expedition, at the head of a very considerable force, against Louis of Sancerre, Mareschal of France. But the Earl of Pembroke declined to join Chandos in the enterprise proposed to him, listening to the paltry insinuations of some flatterers, who persuaded him he would have little share of personal glory if he went out under the command of Chandos, who would engross the whole renown of any joint expedition in which they might be engaged.

Sir John Chandos, piqued at Pembroke's refusal to join him, dismissed great part of his troops, and retired with the rest to the city of Poictiers.

No sooner had Chandos thus retired into quarters, than the Earl of Pembroke, with a force of at least two hundred spears, took the field, with the purpose of winning glory upon his own account, and wasting the lands of those nobles who were hostile to England. As soon as the French lords who held these garrisons, heard that this nobleman had declined the company of Lord Chandos, and was come abroad on his own adventure, they resolved to gather their forces, and attack him suddenly, as a young man whose imprudence had already shown him liable to be surprised in such expeditions. They combined, therefore, an overpowering force, and attacked the Earl of Pembroke and his men at unawares, near a village called Puyrenon, slaying a number of men-at-arms, and forcing the rest to take refuge in a churchyard, which surrounded a building formerly belonging to the Knights Templars. The French knights, commanded by the Mareschal de Sancerre, said among themselves, jestingly, « They have got into a churchyard, it is but fair to give them time to chuse out and dig their graves; and after we have taken dinner, we will visit them, and see how they suit them.» But the Mareschal de Sancerre commanded an instant attack. The assault was made, but with little success on the part of the French, who were repulsed by the English earl and his

party. Still, as the French drew off, they promised themselves better fortune the next day, for the walls of the Temple-house were but thin, and might be easily broken through; and, at all events, the party within were ill appointed both in food and ammunition.

The Earl of Pembroke, who had now reason bitterly to lament his foolish jealousy of Lord Chandos, dispatched an esquire, with orders to issue by a postern-gate, and tell the Seneschal of Poitou the danger in which he was placed, adding, that he might yet receive succour from him if he marched speedily, since he hoped to defend his post until noon, next day. The esquire went on his errand accordingly.

Early next morning the French attacked the English position anew, and persevered from dawn till nine before noon, when the assailants began to collect among the neighbouring peasants pickaxes and mattocks for the purpose of undermining the walls. This mode of attack being that which the English most dreaded, the Earl of Pembroke called a second esquire, desiring him to take the earl's best horse, and convey to his good friend, Lord Chandos, the news of the jeopardy in which they stood, conjuring him by a token to come to his deliverance. The token was a valuable ring, which Chandos had formerly given to the young earl. The messenger escaped by a postern, and went off at full gallop. It chanced that the esquire first dispatched had missed his way, so that he did not reach Poictiers

till nine o'clock. When he did arrive, he delivered the Earl of Pembroke's message to Chandos, requiring his assistance. The good knight received it but coldly, as he still resented the young earl's having declined to join him, though repeatedly invited. He answered indifferently, « there was but little time to hear mass;» a religious ceremony which Catholics then laid much stress upon. When the mass was over, dinner was announced as ready, and the first course was hardly served, when the second esquire arrived, and delivered the Earl of Pembroke's later and more pressing message, requesting assistance. Lord Chandos was still sullen; « to deliver him is impossible,» he said, « if he is in such a strait as you speak of. Let us sit down to dinner—the meat will be cold else.»

But this dogged and ungracious humour was not natural to the noble Chandos. The first thought of his mind having been given to resentment, the next turned upon more exalted sentiments. As the second course was served, he raised his head, which he had held depressed upon his bosom, and said to the knights and squires around him, « Hear me, sirs; the Earl of Pembroke is a noble person, and of high lineage, son-in-law to our natural lord, the King of England. Foul shame were it to see him lost, if I may help it; wherefore I will go to his assistance, with the grace of God. Make ready, sirs, for Puyrenon!» All rushed to arms; and Lord Chandos, at the head of two hundred spears,

made towards the village with such dispatch, that they had good hope of surprising the French who besieged it. But the Mareschal of Sancerre heard of the approach of Chandos, by spies, and took the resolution of drawing off his troops, and securing such prisoners and booty as they had made at the first onset, which last comprehended all the treasures and baggage of the Earl of Pembroke. The earl and his knights, on their part, also retired from the Temple-house with such horses as they had left, some mounted two on one horse, and others walking on foot. When they met with John of Chandos, the earl and he embraced, with tears; and Chandos greatly reflected upon himself that he had not moved on the first summons, when he might have reached Puyrenon time enough to surprise Sancerre and his forces, who had now retired to a place of safety.

The circumstance, besides illustrating the manners of the times, shows also the sort of disputes and rivalry which began to take place between the younger English nobility and those who stood high among the more ancient chivalry, and which doubtless existed on many other, although less memorable occasions than the affair of Puyrenon, where such considerable injury was sustained, by the rashness and presumption of Pembroke, while the opportunity of retaliation was lost, through the sullen resentment of Chandos.

But England was not only to view the services

of this distinguished warrior interrupted and traversed, but also to see them for ever ended, and that in a trivial encounter.

The assault upon the Earl of Pembroke in Puyrenon, took place in 1370; and about the end of that year, a certain monk, belonging to a convent in Saint Salvin, a town in Poitou, contrived, out of spite to his superior the abbot, to betray him and the convent, as well as the town itself, into the hands of Sir Louis Saint Julien, and an adventurer, called Carlonet the Breton, leaders of the French party, who garrisoned it for that crown. The Lord John Chandos made several attempts to recover this place; for, although of no great consequence, he accounted it a diminution of his reputation to have it lost in that manner. But the vigilance of Sir Louis of Saint Julien frustrated all his attempts.

Persevering in his purpose, Sir John, in his character of Seneschal of Poitou, sent to several knights of that country to meet him in the city of Poictiers, on the evening of the 31st of December, 1370, with the purpose of surprising Saint Salvin. The Poitevin knights, who loved and respected Chandos, obeyed his summons, met him accordingly, and their united numbers made up three hundred spears. With this retinue, he marched to the little town of Saint Salvin, and descended into the fosse, which he prepared to pass upon the ice, as the frost was then severe. The warder of the castle at this moment blew his horn; and the sound, so unusual at this

late moment, made the English knights conclude that they were discovered. They drew back, therefore, out of the moat in which they lay in ambush, without persisting in an attempt, which, if discovered, as they supposed, must of course have been rendered impracticable. The watch-horn, however, had no reference to the attack on Saint Salvin, but was designed by the person who blew it to intimate to the fortress the arrival of Carlonet the Breton at the opposite gate, who came to require Sir Louis of Saint Julien to go abroad with him that night, in search of adventures, as was the practice of the time. If, therefore, Chandos could have concealed himself for any time, however short, these two knights must have sallied from Saint Salvin, which, in their absence, would have been an easy prey. But the evil fate of this renowned warrior was too strong for his better genius. He retreated to a village about three leagues from Saint Salvin, where the Poitevin lords, understanding the service of the time to be ended, were dismissed to their homes. Meantime, Sir John Chandos declared it his intention to stay, during the next day, being 31st December, in the town where he now was. Sir Thomas Percy, who was in his company, then asked his permission, since he did not stir abroad himself, to go forth to meet adventures on his own account. Chandos granted his request, and was thus left with a retinue amounting only to forty or fifty spears.

Historians notice, with singular minuteness,

the various steps by which this great warrior approached the fatal close of his life.

Sir Thomas Percy had not long left the town when intelligence reached Chandos that Sir Louis and Carlonet were certainly abroad in the country. Now, although they were almost the personal enemies of Chandos, yet at first he intimated no desire to go in quest of them. He remained for some time in the village, talking with his men, while they warmed themselves at the fire, until, as if upon a sudden reflection, he changed his purpose, and declared his intention to ride abroad, in order to return to Poictiers. He had not advanced far along the side of the river when he heard the neighing of horses; these were the steeds of the French squadron, whose situation, had it been understood by the opposite party, was, in fact, a very dangerous one. Sir Louis Saint Julien, and Carlonet, had, by mere accident, fallen into the rear of Sir Thomas Percy's party, and they were themselves followed, though without knowing it, by that of Lord John Chandos. In this awkward situation, with one enemy in front, and another in the rear, the French knights took the resolution to possess themselves of the Bridge of Lussac, where they dismounted, gave their horses to their pages, and stood to their defence, afraid that they might be attacked in front and rear at once. But they were thus far fortunate that Sir Thomas Percy was not aware of the presence of the party of

Chandos, and did not, therefore, know the difficulty in which the French were placed.

Chandos, who was the first of the English that arrived, saluted his enemies in this manner:—«Ha! Sir Louis Saint Julien, and Carlonet, you make no fair war, riding about by night, and taking towns and captives. I have long desired to see you. I am John Chandos—look upon me well; we shall presently see whether you or I are the best men!» As he spoke these words, he opened the vizor of his helmet, which he forgot again to close, and, throwing himself from horseback, advanced, with his axe in his hand, to charge the Frenchmen, who were also dismounted. But in the very act of joining with his enemy, Chandos slipped his foot, and fell down upon the bridge, which was steep in its ascent, and covered with hoar-frost. A French esquire took the advantage, as he was rising, and thrust a rapier through his eye into his forehead. This was the more easy, because Chandos, who was blind of an eye on that side, could not see the thrust in time to parry it, and also because his vizor was open. The blow penetrated to the brain, and the valiant leader never spoke another word. The fight continued fierce around his body; for the French were determined to avail themselves of their superiority of numbers, and of the great advantage they had obtained, while the English were desirous to revenge the death of Chandos. The squire who had dealt

the fatal thrust was mortally wounded in his turn; but, nevertheless, the numbers of the French must have gained the victory, had it not been that their pages and squires, terrified at seeing the banner, and beholding the advance of the formidable Chandos, had fled from their masters at the very first onset, carrying the horses off with them. Sir Thomas Percy could without difficulty have turned the scale, had he not passed too far forward to be recalled by the noise of the conflict with Chandos. But, to complete the mistakes and changeful accidents of this extraordinary night, another large body of the English party appeared, advancing at a round trot, with lances displayed and streamers waving in the wind. The Frenchmen, alarmed at this unexpected apparition, and unable to escape for want of horses, thought it better to surrender themselves prisoners to the companions of Chandos, whom they had wellnigh discomfited, than to abide the mercy of these new comers. They surrendered, accordingly; and thus the skirmish which, from beginning to end, seemed a blind work of fortune, terminated in a manner totally unlike its commencement.

The death of Lord Chandos was deeply regretted, not only by the English and Gascons, but by the French themselves, who respected him as the person most likely to have brought about a good understanding between the Kings of France and England, and a steady peace between the kingdoms. After his death, a consi-

derable decay of wisdom, spirit, and conduct, might be observed on the side of the English, and the removal of so great a general from the field of battle could in no respect be made up or compensated.

It is true, that, before the event which we have narrated here, in order to conclude the subject of Lord Chandos, Edward III had endeavoured to strengthen himself in France, by dispatching to Calais his son, commonly called John of Gaunt, with five hundred men-at-arms, and a gallant force of archers, with whom the Count of Namur united himself as an auxiliary of England.

The King of France, on the other hand, hearing that an army, commanded by a son of England, had entered Calais, and made frequent incursions into the country around, dispatched, to oppose him, the Duke of Burgundy, who was the ablest of his brothers, with a force, which, compared with that of the invaders, was more than seven to one. He imposed, however, upon this prince, strict commands, that he should on no account venture upon an engagement, for the recollections of former battles lost in spite of the greatest inequality of numbers, rendered such a risk extremely unadvisable. Thus restrained by the royal command, the Duke of Burgundy took post in the vicinity of Calais, between Saint Omers and Tournehan, while the Duke of Lancaster, on the opposite side, occupied a very strong position, fortified with hedges, ditches,

and enclosures, which rendered those who lay there unassailable; so that the armies faced each other, while little passed that was remarkable, except a few skirmishes.

In the estimation of those times, the character of the Duke of Burgundy suffered considerably in the eyes of the public, by shunning an encounter with an inferior army; yet it was precisely by the French attacking an inferior number of English, in a post of extraordinary strength, that Edward III and the Black Prince had gained their immortal trophies. The Duke of Burgundy was, notwithstanding, so much hurt by his situation, that he applied to the king, his brother, requesting permission, either to give battle to the English, or to depart from a position in which his reputation suffered.

Charles preferred that alternative which should put the country in the least peril. He therefore commanded the Duke of Burgundy to raise his camp, and come to him at Paris. The French prince effected this manœuvre so cautiously, that the first intimation which the English had of their enemy's retreat (A. D. 1369), was the fires which consumed the tents and huts which they had lately occupied. The Duke of Lancaster, on the retreat of the great French army, determined to march into France, and advancing from Calais to the eastward, left severe marks of his displeasure upon the villages and cultivated country, subjecting to especial rigour those who had shown themselves unfriendly to England.

As the Duke returned to Calais, after a wasteful tour, little that was interesting took place, although the following turn of fortune may be worth mentioning:—Hugh de Chastillon, who was master of the cross-bows of France, commanded the French garrison of Abbeville. This gentleman took horse, with ten or twelve attendants, resolved, seeing the Duke of Lancaster was tending that way, to view with his own eyes the preparations made to receive him. Now, while he was on this service, Sir Nicolas Louvaine, an Englishman, was reconnoitring in the same direction. He had been a seneschal of the King of England in that country, was well acquainted with all its fastnesses and bypaths, and had insinuated himself into a ruinous village hard by the gates of Abbeville, where no ambuscade could be suspected. This Sir Nicolas had been made prisoner the year before by the same Chastillon, and he felt as an injury the high sum of ten thousand crowns, which he had been obliged to pay as his ransom. It was to his infinite joy, therefore, that he saw, in the person of a cavalier who advanced carelessly, and ill prepared for battle (for his page was riding his war-horse, and carrying his helmet), his late captor, Sir Hugh of Chastillon. «Come on,» said Louvaine to his party, being twenty men-at-arms, «yonder is our prey, whom I would rather possess, than all the world beside!» He rushed then suddenly on Chastillon, with his lance in rest, calling aloud, «Yield ye, or die!»—«To whom

must I yield?» said the captain of the cross-bows, astonished to find himself overpowered, when he supposed himself most in security.—«To your old acquaintance Louvaine, who requires from you the ten thousand crowns which you exacted as his ransom.» Accordingly it became Chastillon's turn to rescue himself upon the terms which Louvaine prescribed.

Such accidents as these might impoverish or enrich the military men to whom they happened, but the general effect of the war on both countries was that of exhausting them both of men and money. Still the French, confiding in the wisdom and patriotism of Charles, submitted cheerfully to very heavy taxes, confident that they would be employed in defending the independence of the country. The assembly of estates patiently acquiesced in the imposition of the same taxes, which the nation had paid for the ransom of King John; and also in a tax of hearth-money, in effect nearly the same with the *fouage*, which, when imposed in Gascony, cost the Black Prince so much of his popularity;—so different is the good-will of the people in the payment of taxes, which they conceive necessary for their defence, compared to that with which they regard impositions which are bestowed upon objects, either altogether idle and unnecessary, or directed to unpopular and unnational purposes.

A marauding party, far less numerous than that under the Duke of Lancaster, was commanded by Sir Robert Knolles, that distinguished

officer, who, from a mean origin, had raised himself to great distinction by his interest among the Grand Companies. He was now commissioned with an army of thirty thousand men to lay waste the kingdom of France on behalf of Edward III,—a wasteful mode of warfare, inconsistent with the idea held out of permanent conquest.

Knolles took his departure from Calais at the head of his troops in the end of July (A. D. 1370), and moved forward by Terouenne and Artois, making easy marches, halting regularly every night, and burning and ravaging the country. Occasionally Sir Robert Knolles, who appears to have retained some old remnants of the adventurer, used to accept of sums of money, in consideration of which he spared particular districts, and forbore those violences in which he was accustomed to indulge. This was a course of conduct so misrepresented to Edward III, that in the end it had like to have cost Sir Robert dear. In the meantime, this predatory general's march was directed upon the city of Paris; not that he could hope to gain possession of it, but from the desire to spread confusion and terror in the neighbourhood, and perhaps to provoke a part of the inhabitants to issue out and take the chance of battle. He approached the city so near, that the fires which he raised in the neighbouring villages were plainly seen from the walls of Paris; and a knight of the English army had an opportunity, and, as it proved, a fatal one, of accom-

plishing one of those vows of chivalry which were fashionable at the period; of which the more desperate and extraordinary, always added the more to the renown of those by whom they were achieved. This adventurer had, it seems, made a vow that he would strike his spear upon the gate of Paris. For this purpose, he rushed forth from the ranks, and followed by his squire, whom he soon outstript, rode up to the gate, where he found the barriers open. There were several French knights standing by the barrier, who marvelled what this single man was about to attempt; but when they saw him satisfied with striking his lance upon the gate, and reining round his courser to return, they laughed, and said, «Go thy way for a brave knight, that hast well accomplished thy vow!» The citizens of Paris and the suburbs had not the same sympathy with the adventurous knight as was entertained by those who were his brothers in chivalry. He learned the difference of these feelings upon his return; for a butcher, who had seen him pass through the suburb, waylaid him in his return, and, coming behind him with a cleaver, struck him from his horse. The squire, alarmed for his master's fate on seeing his horse return without a rider, advanced into the suburb far enough to behold the knight prostrate on the ground, and four or five strong mechanics beating upon him at once, like smiths upon a stithy. He fled, therefore, to carry to Knolles's camp the account of the knight's misadventure.

Sir Robert Knolles encamped that night within sight of Paris; and we shall presently give an account of the termination of his adventurous expedition, which was concluded by an engagement betwixt him and the celebrated Bertrand du Guesclin.

In the meantime, the events of the war continued unfavourable to England. An astrologer of that time might have said, that as a star auspicious to England had set in the horizon, so another had arisen friendly to France, and in the highest degree hostile to her enemy. Something of the kind actually happened in the terrestrial world; for in this year the gallant Black Prince was lost to his trade of arms, and the formidable Bertrand du Guesclin resumed that command in the service of Charles, which occasioned his being surnamed the Restorer of the French Monarchy.

CHAPTER X.

Revolt of Limoges to the French—the Black Prince besieges and re-captures it—Death of the Black Prince—Bertrand du Guesclin made Constable of France—the Constable defeats the English at Pont Volant—Marriage of the Duke of Lancaster to a Daughter of Don Pedro the Cruel, by which alliance Henry, the Reigning Prince of Castile, is rendered an Enemy to England—Defeat of the English Fleet by the Spanish, off Rochelle—Rochelle delivered by the Mayor to the French—the Constable captures Poictiers—Thouars besieged, and surrenders to the French—Charles of France drives the Count de Montfort from Bretagne, and declares that Duchy forfeited to the French Crown—the Breton Lords rise in insurrection, and drive the French from their Country—Death of the Constable Du Guesclin, while besieging Chateau neuf du Randun—Charles of Navarre deprived of the Dominions he held in France—Horrible Death of Charles of Navarre—Death of Charles V, surnamed the Wise.

You have been already informed that Edward, the renowned Black Prince, had never enjoyed his usual health since the expedition into Spain. It was in vain that as difficulties multiplied around him, his high spirit struggled against the decay of strength and the increase of the debilitating disorder, which appears to have been dropsical. Yet it was not the will of fate that this celebrated champion should depart from the

scene without one final ray of victory shining upon his banner. This parting favour was granted in a case in which his haughty spirit was deeply interested.

Among other advantages gained by the French in consequence of the general dissatisfaction of the Gascons against the English, the revolt of the strong city of Limoges was one of the most distinguished. This city had yielded itself up by the instigation of its bishop, whose recommendations induced the inhabitants to revolt, and admit a French garrison; the surrender was made to the Duke of Anjou, and Bertrand du Guesclin remained in the province of the Limosin, to protect this important acquisition by his presence.

The Prince of Wales, on the other hand, was dreadfully offended, not only with the bishop, who had formerly been his personal friend, but with the citizens of Limoges, who had so lightly changed their party. He could not now mount a horse; but, hastily assembling an army of about twelve hundred lances, and two thousand archers, he caused them to move forward upon Limoges, he himself being borne in an open litter at the head of his troops. The garrison treated with scorn his summons to surrender, for they confided in the strength of their fortifications, which had indeed been constructed by the prince himself. Immediately upon receiving a scornful refusal to give up the place, the Prince of Wales laid close siege to the town, which he pressed on by means of mines driven under the walls,

for which service he was provided with the best artisans of the period. Bertrand du Guesclin kept the field in the meantime with two hundred spears, with which he made incursions on the territory, which was yet English, and endeavoured by various means to divert the attention of the Prince of Wales from the siege of Limoges. It was not, however, in the power of Du Guesclin to baffle the last and almost dying efforts of this celebrated hero, who remained totally regardless of the diversions with which Du Guesclin endeavoured to amuse him. The prince pressed on the siege with unabated vigour, attending entirely to the conduct of the mines, until the engineers had informed him that they were prepared to throw down a part of the wall sufficient to admit his entering in battalion. Accordingly, the use of gunpowder in such mines being as yet unknown, the miners had orders to set fire to the props by which they supported the wall during the time they had carried on their operations. Of course, a portion of the wall, about thirty feet in extent, fell into the ditch and filled it up, while the English division appointed for the storm rushed over the ruins. The gates, at the same time, were secured by another part of the English army. All escape was impossible; and the unfortunate inhabitants had it only in their power to prostrate themselves in the streets, and implore with piteous cries the compassion of the prince, who was determined to grant none. The slaughter was indiscriminate, and while the

prince himself was borne into the town upon his litter, the guards who attended him slew men, women, and children, with their pole-axes and swords. Four thousand persons were put to the sword, without distinguishing the unarmed from the armed, men from women, or children from adults. The sight of four gallant Frenchmen defending themselves with much bravery, first waked Edward's sympathy. Each was matched with a noble and almost royal antagonist; for the four men-at-arms were engaged hand to hand with the Duke of Lancaster and Earl of Cambridge, brothers to the Prince of Wales, with the Earl of Pembroke, his brother-in-law, and with another distinguished English warrior. The Black Prince stopped his litter to behold this sharp conflict, calculated to awaken his sense of generosity, which remained lively, though his humanity was extinguished. While the prince's litter stood still, that he might behold the pleasing spectacle of a desperate combat, the French knights took the opportunity to surrender and yield up their swords to him. They were dismissed with praises, and the heart of the conqueror was somewhat appeased towards the vanquished by the chivalry which these combatants had displayed. But the victor's anger revived when the Bishop of Limoges, first author of the revolt of the city, was brought before him. In the first heat of his wrath, he commanded him to be beheaded; and it was with difficulty that he was finally induced to spare his life.

The retaking of Limoges was the last military feat of this renowned warrior; and we regret to trace in it so much of the cruelty of the period, and so little of its generosity. We have only farther to mention, that in the beginning of the next year, the Black Prince had the great misfortune of losing his eldest son; and, his own illness increasing, he was determined to try what his native air might avail for his recovery. He substituted his brother, the Duke of Lancaster, to be his representative in the principality of Aquitaine; and he left for ever the country in which he himself had gained so much glory, and upon which he had inflicted such extensive calamities. This great prince died at Westminster, on the 8th day of June, 1376; and his father, exhausted by age, and various causes of mortification which overclouded his last years, did not long survive him. Edward III died on the 21st of June, 1377, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. In resuming our story, we shall have to mention circumstances which happened before the date of his death.

While fate was thus removing the two greatest enemies of France, the King of that country was exerting himself, by the best means, the promotion, namely, of merit and worth, to provide for the protection of his realm. An office, always most important, but at this time particularly so, had become vacant in 1370; this was the situation of Constable of France, the highest military dignity in that kingdom, of the most im-

portant consequence, from the power which it conferred, and especially when the king, which might be said of Charles V, was not warlike in his person, or in the habit of heading his armies. The vacancy was occasioned by the resignation of a good knight, named Moreau de Fionness, who was become, by age and infirmities, unfit to discharge the duties of the office, which he therefore resigned into the king's hands. It had been the custom to bestow this high office on persons of the most eminent rank; but, by the universal suffrages of his kingdom, Charles now resolved to confer so important a charge, with reference less to the dignity than the worth of the person to be employed. On this footing, all eyes were turned to Bertrand du Guesclin, as the most valiant knight, the most expert leader, the most fortunate and successful warrior, who fought under the banners of France. Nay, since the Black Prince was unable to bear armour, he was universally considered as the best general living.

Du Guesclin, summoned to the king's presence, rode from the district of the Limosin to Paris accordingly: but when he heard that the king, with full assent of all his nobles and peers, had pitched upon him to be Constable of France, he modestly stated his incapacity for such an important office, and the difficulty which he, a poor knight, must expect in making himself obeyed by the great and powerful princes of France. The king's resolution was taken upon too good

grounds to be evaded by this modest plea; he insisted upon the charge being accepted by the warrior who had shown himself most capable of bearing it. Du Guesclin then asked to limit his acceptance with a condition, that in case complaints should be brought against him, the king should deign to refuse credence to any which the informer was not ready to vouch in presence of the accused; a reasonable request, which was readily granted.

But although a distinguished warrior was thus invested with full military command in France, there were still circumstances affecting in a great degree the welfare of the kingdom, the consideration and decision of which the king reserved for himself. Greatly as that wise prince esteemed Du Guesclin, he saw danger in the Constable's suffering his high ideas of chivalry to lead him into the error of precipitating a general engagement, by which France had so often suffered, and which was at all times too deep a stake to be hastily adventured. He therefore resolved, while he resigned to the Constable the unlimited direction of the French army, that he would suffer him at no time to possess a force so strong as might encourage him to venture a battle on a large scale, trusting that when he fought upon a small one, his knowledge of war could not be excelled, if, indeed, it was equalled, by that of any of the English leaders. This restriction the king reserved within his own breast. To have expressed it, might have implied distrust of his general, and

still more of his soldiers. He therefore readily acceded to the new constable's proposal, to ride after Sir Robert Knolles; yet it is said, furnished him with no more men than should enable him to watch the enemy, but not to bring him to action. But the faithful Du Guesclin augmented his forces, by treasure of his own, and for that purpose sold a number of rich jewels and other articles of value.

The time, indeed, was very favourable for an attack upon the army of Knolles. This commander, as you have been already informed, had marched to the gates of Paris, without being able to strike a considerable blow, so that many of the men of rank who served with him, were disposed to be discontented with their commander's authority. It had been his purpose to lead his army into the duchy of Bretagne, as the safest place for winter-quarters, considering that there would be then a necessity for dividing themselves into separate bodies, when an active enemy like Du Guesclin might, in the opinion of the experienced general, attack them with advantage. Lord Grandison, Lord Fitzwalter, and other English nobles, refused to retire into Bretagne, in obedience to Sir Robert Knolles. He was of too mean rank, they said, to command noblemen like themselves; they therefore drew off from his army, which was thus much weakened, and quartered themselves in the marches of Anjou and Touraine, not holding such communication as martial duties required, but straggling

separate, each leader according to his own pleasure.

While disunion was thus gaining ground among the English, and want of discipline arising in proportion, Bertrand du Guesclin obtained news of all their proceedings from a traitorous knight, called Sir John Menstreworth, who privately corresponded with the French, and found an opportunity of discovering to them a very important secret. The new constable, with his forces, had already advanced on an enterprise against Sir Robert Knolles, then in quarters in Bretagne. The artful Knolles was rejoiced to hear of his approach, resolving within himself that he would assemble secretly and suddenly the troops who had lately left his standard, and thus collect a body of forces with which he could not doubt that he would be able to overpower Du Guesclin, and his party. Lord Grandison, Lord Fitzwalter, and the other discontented nobles, received therefore private instructions to repair to the camp of Sir Robert Knolles, for the accomplishment of this purpose; and as the orders intimated the approach of battle, none of them hesitated to obey the summons. On the other side, Sir Robert called to his assistance Sir Hugh Calverley, and other captains of the Companions. All this plan, and these summonses, were known to the treacherous Sir John Menstreworth, and by him communicated to the Constable of France, who resolved, by his active movements, to prevent the plan of the English general, and strike a blow at

the forces out of which Knolles proposed to form his army, while they were yet separated from the main body. For this purpose, aware of the march of Grandison, Fitzwalter, and their party, the constable contrived to meet them at a place called Pont Volant, half way before they could join with Knolles, and attacking them with nearly double their numbers, reduced them soon to extremity. The English, however, alighting from horseback, defended themselves for some time manfully on foot, with swords, spears, and battle-axes. They could not, however, long endure so unequal a combat; and as their pages, who held their horses, fled with them so soon as the day was lost, the principal part of the nobles engaged remained on the spot, either slain or prisoners. This blow, which gave the greatest spirit to the French, seemed proportionally discouraging to the English; and, as it happened so recently after Du Guesclin had become constable, it gained him honour in the eyes of the king, and of the nation, as affording an earnest of his important services. The immediate consequence of the defeat of the English at Pont Volant was, that Sir Robert Knolles, already prejudiced in King Edward's opinion, for having taken rewards for sparing the country of France, fell into such suspicion, that he hesitated for some time to trust himself within the bounds of Britain. But the treason of Sir John Menstreworth becoming public, the explanations of the veteran Knolles were favourably received; and as the real traitor fell into the hands

of the British, and was executed for his perfidy, Knolles became entirely restored to King Edward's favour.

The Constable of France did not long slumber after his success at Pont Volant, but, taking the field again at Candlemas, seized many fortresses, and with prevailing, though by no means uniform good fortune, carried on the war in Guienne and the neighbouring counties.

The Duke of Lancaster now supported at Bordeaux a princely state, not inferior to that of the Black Prince himself, whom he resembled in courage and pride, though he was unequal to him in good fortune, or rather in that military science, by which good fortune is in a great measure secured or improved. An alliance of his also, though the duke was naturally led into it by what seemed the voice of prudence, and was certainly that of ambition, contributed to force him into the false line of policy adopted by the Black Prince himself. Don Pedro the Cruel, who died by the hand of his brother King Henry, before the Castle of Montiel, as we have already stated, left behind him two daughters, the eldest of whom was undoubtedly heir to his kingdom of Castile. These orphan princesses were now residing in Gascony, pledges for a sum of money which had been borrowed by their father. John of Gaunt was now in the flower of his age, a widower, by the death of his wife the late Lady Blanche; and, flattered by the splendid title of King of Castile, to which he aspired, he gave his hand to the eldest of these

unfortunate princesses, while the second was wedded at the same time to his brother the Duke of Cambridge. By this unhappy step, the Duke of Lancaster added to the difficulties arising from the French war, so many and so numerous in themselves, the gloomy prospect of a quarrel with Henry, the King of Castile, who became in consequence a very violent and dangerous enemy to England, which was not long in experiencing the effects of his enmity.

In 1371, the Duke of Lancaster, having returned to England with his royal bride, the Earl of Pembroke was appointed to sail as commander-in-chief of the English forces to the principality of Aquitaine. He had a fleet of forty ships, having on board a considerable body of troops, with supplies of money and ammunition essentially requisite to the support of the sinking cause of England in the south of France. Thus provided, he sailed for Rochelle; but as he approached that place, he was encountered by a powerful fleet (A. D. 1372, June 23) belonging to Henry of Transtamara, the actual King of Castile, who was called upon imperiously to espouse the cause of the French, the Duke of Lancaster having, in right of his wife the princess Constance, laid claim to his kingdom. The two navies of England and Spain encountered fiercely with each other, and the combat endured until the evening of the second day, when the Spaniards obtained a complete victory. It is said this superiority was owing not only to the size of the Spanish

vessels, which were larger than those of the English, but to the use of cannon on the part of the former—a weapon for the first time made use of in naval war. The greatest part of the English fleet was burnt, taken, or sunk; and the Earl of Pembroke, often already mentioned, son-in-law to Edward III, remained, with many other knights of quality, prisoners of war to the Spaniards. Such were the first evil fruits flowing from the marriage of John of Gaunt with the daughter of Don Pedro the Cruel. The failure of this attempt to send supplies to Guienne, left that province, with all parts of the principality of Aquitaine, wellnigh at the absolute pleasure of the Constable du Guesclin, who, alternately by address and by arms, took and garrisoned many places of strength, some with very little resistance, others with none at all.

The case of Rochelle may be mentioned as an instance how much the feelings of the Gascon people were now turned against their late masters the English. Shortly after the naval battle which we have already mentioned, and which was fought off this harbour, the mayor of Rochelle, one John Chaudron, moved, no, doubt, by the issue of the battle and defeat of the English, contrived a mode of surrendering that important seaport to the King of France. The English, however, had still a garrison in the castle, of which Philip Mansel, an uneducated man of no peculiar sagacity, was the temporary governor. The mayor, having secured a party of burgesses

in his plot, undertook to circumvent the thick-headed commander of the citadel. He invited Mansel to a civic feast, where he exhibited a letter under the broad seal of England (one of an old date), shrewdly suspecting that the governor could not read a word of it. « You perceive from this letter, » said the mayor, boldly exhibiting it to the ignorant governor, « that the king has commanded the garrison of the castle, and that of the city, to be alternately reviewed by the commanders of each; wherefore I will make my musters to-morrow, if it pleases you to review them; and you, if it please you, shall bring your force out of the castle, that I may inspect them in my turn in the manner here appointed.»

The incautious Mansel, affecting to believe and understand words which had no existence in the letter, was induced to bring his men out of the castle towards the field where the rendezvous was to be held. The mayor, seeing the stratagem so far successful, interposed a strong body of armed citizens between the garrison and the castle gate, and compelled them to lay down their arms. It was probably by the patriotism of this mayor of Rochelle, that the city, thus won from the English by the courage or ingenuity of the citizens, was not surrendered to the French crown absolutely, but only under stipulation that the citizens of Rochelle should have leave to demolish the castle, and be secured against the erection of another; also, that they should never be separated or alienated from the kingdom of

France; and thirdly, that they should be allowed to coin money upon the same conditions on which the privilege was enjoyed by the city of Paris.

The strong town of Poictiers also augmented the triumphs of the gallant constable. A skirmish shortly after took place of little importance in itself, but of considerable weight from its consequences. The Lord de Greilly, renowned in our former history by the name of the Captal de Buche, and often mentioned on account of his gallantry, was made prisoner, and, as a captive of great consequence, was speedily despatched to Paris. His worth and character in war were not better known, than the constant fidelity with which he had served the cause of the English. The King of France, therefore, followed the policy which the Prince of Wales was thought to have adopted respecting Bertrand du Guesclin, when the latter was made prisoner at the battle of Navarette, that is, he would not fix any ransom upon the unfortunate warrior, who died in the course of five years an unredeemed captive. Authors have said that the Captal, as a firm adherent of Edward and of the Black Prince, lost his health and spirits upon their decease, and pined to death of melancholy in his confinement.

In the meantime, the last post possessed by the English in Gascony was the town of Thouars, then a place of considerable strength. The constable speedily formed the siege of the place, and

pressed it on with such vigour, that the English lords who were enclosed in it, consisting of the noblest and best of those partisans whom the numerous skirmishes and seiges had left, were contented to come to a species of terms not unusual at that time. They engaged to surrender against next Michaelmas, provided that the King of England, or one of his sons, should not before that time bring them succour in person.

Edward, to whom this agreement was communicated, expressed himself highly incensed, that a prince so unwarlike as Charles of France, who was seldom seen with armour on his back, or a lance in his hand, should give him so much more trouble than all his martial predecessors, and once more swore to take the field in person, with the purpose, not only of relieving Thouars, but of invading, and finally conquering France. The king put to sea accordingly, with a considerable army, his destination being the seaport of Rochelle; but the winds and waves were obstinately adverse to the course he proposed; and, after a desperate struggle, King Edward, to whom fortune had been so long favourable by land and sea, saw himself absolutely obliged to return to England, without relieving the fortress.

Thouars was therefore left to its fate. The barons of Guienne, who remained faithful to England, offered indeed, at the very last, to advance with twelve hundred spears to the relief of this important place, provided the besieged would accept of their assistance. But the knights

enclosed within the town had plighted their faith to surrender to the constable, unless Edward, or one of his sons, came in person to their relief. Thouars, therefore, was given up to the French, on the terms of the treaty.

The cause of England in France being at this low ebb, the King of France thought he might very safely take the opportunity to avenge himself upon the Count de Montfort, Duke of Bretagne, whose father had been one of the principal instigators in fostering the original war between England and France. The prince at whom he aimed this blow was, indeed, already wellnigh forced from his dominions by two of his own subjects, the Constable du Guesclin, and Oliver de Clisson, both steady adherents of the French, and equally inimical to the English. Having gained this great advantage over John de Montfort, Charles resolved to pay no attention to the neutrality secured to him by a special article of the treaty of Bretigny. But, disregarding this engagement, he determined not to permit a person so hostile to him to reign as a petty sovereign in Bretagne, and accordingly drove him out of his own country, and obliged him to take refuge in England. Edward, however, on the arrival of his ally and relative, in this expatriated condition, was not wanting in such exertions as might have a chance of repairing the sinking affairs of the Duke of Bretagne.

He raïsed an army of fifty thousand men, which, under the command of the Duke of Lan-

caster, landed at Calais, in summer 1372, with the purpose, on the duke's part, of emulating his father's deeds, restoring the English affairs, and replacing the Duke of Bretagne in his government. But, as was the fate of all Edward III's latter expeditions, no result followed worthy of such great preparations.

The Duke of Lancaster sallied from Calais, at the head of his army. He had with him the Earls of Warwick, Stafford, Suffolk, with Lord Edward Spencer. They marched with precaution, being closely watched by three armies of the French, one commanded by the Duke of Burgundy, one by the Duke of Bourbon, a third, consisting chiefly of cavalry, headed by the indefatigable Du Guesclin, which followed in the rear of the English, cutting off all who strayed from their standard; and, thus enclosed and observed, the English could make little spoil upon the country, without exposing themselves to instant retaliation.

Their generals, too, differed in opinion. John de Montfort pressed the Duke of Lancaster to lead his troops into Bretagne, insisting that the reconquest of his duchy was the chief object of the war. The Duke of Lancaster, on the other hand, was determined to march to Bordeaux, to establish the English power in Gascony. He accordingly precipitated his course to Bordeaux, and at length reached that city, but not without losing four-fifths of his army in a hurried and disastrous march thither. Nor were the Duke

of Bretagne and the Duke of Lancaster ever afterwards on the same footing of good understanding which once subsisted between them.

King Charles, perceiving the dissension between the Duke of Bretagne and his powerful ally, thought the time was favourable to his great object of uniting to the crown the duchy of Bretagne, whose sea-coasts, and the friendship of its sovereigns, had so often afforded facility to invasions from England. He accordingly proposed the forfeiture of this powerful vassal to the Estates of France, and obtained their sentence to that effect. But the Breton lords, although unfriendly to the duke's English alliance, were attached to their independence, and to the De Montfort family. Instead of confirming them in their love for France, by uniting them with the empire, Charles provoked their resentment by this attempt at confiscation. The nobles of Bretagne returned to the allegiance of their duke, and readily assembling in arms, drove the French out of the bounds of the dukedom, and invited home John de Montfort from his exile in England. The issue of these events belongs to the next reign. A truce had concluded the bloodshed of this war for a period of one year. King Charles himself was taken ill, with little hope of recovery.

An incident occurred which tended to sadden, in no small degree, the thoughts of his dying bed. This was the death of the valiant Du Guesclin, who held, by the king's personal

choice, with so much advantage to the country, and glory to himself, the baton of High Constable of France. He had been employed in the war in Bretagne, and still more recently in that of Guienne; and had in both conducted himself with the same gallantry and success which he had all along exhibited. The last act of his life was laying siege to the Chateau neuf du Randun. He had summoned the fortress, in terms which were boldly but respectfully answered by the commandant. On his refusal to surrender, Du Guesclin pitched his tent before the place, and pressed it by a close siege. It is said, with little probability, that the melancholy inspired by the obstinacy of the resistance, first brought on disease in this great captain. Bertrand Du Guesclin must, however, have been too well acquainted with the chances of war, to feel, as a great misfortune, the prolonged opposition of a petty fortress. He fell ill, however, from whatever cause, and became speedily conscious that he was upon his deathbed. Willing to expend his last spark of life in the service of the country to which it had been dedicated, Du Guesclin sent the commandant of Chateau neuf du Randun, a positive summons to surrender the place instantly, if he desired to profit by his intercessions with the King of France in his favour. The commandant, moved by the resolute and severe tone in which this message was delivered, declared he would deliver the keys of his fortress to the Constable of France, but to no leader of inferior degree.

He was conducted, therefore, to the tent of Du Guesclin; but he was no longer alive; and the commandant was compelled to lay the emblems of submission at the feet of a lifeless corpse.

Thus died, in the very act of reconquering the dismembered provinces of his country, a champion than whom the rolls of history contain few braver or more successful. Du Guesclin was not exempted from the evil qualities of the time, for his valour was occasionally sullied by cruelty; but his rise from ordinary rank to greatness, was the effort of his own high talents, and, employed as they were in the service of his country, those talents could not be too much admired or praised. It was not his least merit that all the liberal donations of land and treasure conferred on him by the king were uniformly applied by him to the public service; so that Charles, though conscious what he owed to this great and successful general, could hardly devise the means of affording him a recompense for his services. To fill up the vacancy occasioned by his death, King Charles recommended to his council, that Oliver de Clisson, Guesclin's friend and companion in arms, a Breton, too, like himself, should be appointed to succeed him. Meantime, though now affected by disease, certainly incurable, whatever was its origin, Charles V still studied the great purpose of his ambition, which was the reunion of France into one kingdom.

This desirable object had met with a great obstacle in the King of Navarre, Charles the Bad.

This prince had claims, as he pretended, upon the crown of France itself; and, besides, he was entitled to various possessions in several parts of that kingdom, but especially in Normandy. To dispossess him of these was the object of King Charles V's dying policy; he revived therefore against the King of Navarre an accusation of high treason, as having administered poison to the royal person of his liege lord. This, as a high feudal delinquency, necessarily inferring the forfeiture of the fief, had been reserved as a charge against Navarre, when the time of making such an accusation with effect should at length arrive. The noxious draught was said to have been so potent, that Charles V lost his hair and his nails, and retained to the end of his life the marks of having taken poison. Yet though various other points of discussion had arisen between the princes, and more than one truce had been entered into, the affair was never judicially brought forward, until the expulsion of the English from so many places of importance in France had rendered any rebellion of Charles of Navarre of less consequence. The wicked prince was deprived, by a sentence of the Estates, of such dominions as he still held in France. His being condemned in this celebrated process, renders it seldom necessary to mention him hereafter; wherefore, we anticipate the course of time, to narrate, in this place, the horrible death by which he closed an existence, which was but a tissue of crimes.

Continuing his course of vicious habits as a man, and political intrigues as a prince, till he was full sixty years old, the difficulties which Charles the Bad had incurred in the wars between Spain, England, and France, obliged this prince to demand a heavy capitation-tax from his subjects of Navarre. He proposed that the wealthy inhabitants should pay ten francs, inferior persons five, and the rest of his subjects one franc each. The deputies representing the different bodies and towns of the kingdom of Navarre assured him, that as they were not yet acquitted of a tax formerly laid upon them, they were not able to endure this new imposition, and therefore conjured him to have mercy on his subjects. By way of answer to these remonstrances, Charles caused the deputies to be enclosed in a strong-walled garden, where he had conferred with them. They were thus strictly confined, and sparingly supplied with meat and drink, while Charles caused the heads of three of their number to be struck off, in order to intimidate the others. How this tragedy would otherwise have ended, is uncertain; for Heaven, in its own time, and by extraordinary means, put an end to this wicked prince's tyranny.

The King of Navarre's habits of profligacy had so far reduced his constitution, that he was ordered by the physicians to swathe himself in a vestment steeped in spirit of wine. By the same advice, his bed was warmed with a chauffoir of hot coals; and he had used these means of reco-

vering natural heat repeatedly without accident. But while he was agitating these cruel resolutions against the deputies of his subjects, and using this course of bringing himself to warmth, «by the pleasure of God,» says Froissart, «or of the devil, the fire caught to his sheets, and from that to his person, swathed as it was in matter highly inflammable.» Before he could be rescued, he was burnt to the bowels, yet survived fifteen days, in indescribable wretchedness. Such was the horrible end of the wicked King of Navarre.

We return to the purposes of King Charles of France upon his deathbed. While he meditated and endeavoured to execute the changes already noticed, his own life was drawing near to a close. He died a victim, it is said, not very probably, to the poison so long before administered by the King of Navarre; and his death was felt by the country with deeper regret than that of a sovereign is often regarded. Quiet, sedate, temperate in his passions, viewing clearly, weighing deliberately, and wisely selecting the objects of his policy, Charles never rashly changed, and rarely ultimately abandoned them. Though born in warlike times, he was himself no warrior; and this was a fortunate circumstance, since he was never liable to be driven forward by the vehement desire of personal distinction, or the sense of personal shame, which hurried his predecessors, Philip of Valois and John, into the fatal fields of Cressy and Poictiers.

CHAPTER XI.

Accession of Charles VI, when only six years of age—Regency of the Duke of Anjou, who seizes the Treasures of Charles V, which he afterwards employed in advancing his own claim to the Crown of Sicily and Naples—An English Army under the Duke of Buckingham sent to the assistance of Count de Montfort, who promises to support them, but makes a Peace with France, and compels his English Allies to evacuate Bretagne—Disorders in Flanders—Insurrection of the Ghentois, under D'Arteville —The French espouse the part of the Earl of Flanders, and the English that of the Insurgents—Defeat of the Insurgents at Rosebecque—Marriage of Charles VI—Expedition of the Bishop of Norwich—the Bishop worsted, and compelled to retreat to Calais—Expedition of the Duke of Anjou, to establish his claims to the Throne of Naples—his Failure, and Death—Adventures of two Captains of Free Companions, Geoffrey Tête-noir and Amergot Marcell—Unsuccessful Attempt of the Duke of Lancaster to conquer Castile, the Crown of which he claimed in right of his Wife, the Daughter of Don Pedro the Cruel —Wreck of a French Fleet assembled in the Harbour of Sluyse for the Invasion of England—Arrest of Oliver de Clisson, Constable of France, by the Duke of Bretagne—his Imprisonment, and Ransom.

UNFORTUNATELY for the kingdom of France, the successor of Charles the Wise, who was also named Charles, being the sixth king so called, was at this time only twelve years old; and there

was a necessity for appointing a regent. The Duke of Anjou, the eldest brother of the deceased monarch, had been one of the most active leaders during his life, and was supposed to be possessed of considerable talent; he was a mortal enemy to the English, and a principal actor during the late reign in making war upon them in the south of France. They accused him also of treachery in breaking his word of parole; and his character in general did not stand very high for truth and sincerity.

This prince obtained, however, the regency by appointment of the Estates, but the education and personal care of the king was not trusted to the Duke of Anjou; the Duke of Burgundy, the king's uncle by the father's side, and the Duke of Bourbon, who bore him the same relation by the mother's, being appointed his immediate personal guardians.

Unhappily for France, the Regent Duke of Anjou had a private interest of his own entirely different from that of the kingdom at large. The last Queen of Sicily and Naples was the celebrated Joan, who possessed these fair provinces in her own right. She was a profligate and infamous person, who, besides leading a vicious course of life, had rid herself of her husband, Andrew, by assassination. It is said, that one day this unfortunate prince found her weaving a cord made of silk and gold so remarkable in appearance, that he was induced to ask what purpose she designed to apply it to. Joan truly

answered, « it was designed to hang her husband with;» and shortly after caused this cruel assassination to be performed by the very cord in question. At the period of her death, this unhappy queen, by the counsel and advice of the Pope, bequeathed her crown and dominions to the Duke of Anjou, who, with the flattering prospect before him, of a kingdom which was to be his own, was little disposed to pay due attention to the interests of that country of which he was regent for his nephew. One of his first resolutions (and certainly one which could not be vindicated on any principle of morality), was to seize upon the treasures of the late King Charles, his brother, who, by his policy and economy, had amassed large sums of gold and silver, which he kept concealed in the castle of Melun. The sum amounted, it is said, to seventeen millions of francs. Violence, and even threats of death, were unscrupulously employed, to make the old officers of Charles communicate the knowledge of his treasure. They were at length obliged to produce it; and the Duke of Anjou took possession of this mass of wealth.

The first effort of the new government, divided as they were by the various claims of the princes of the blood, was exerted to procure a settlement amongst them · and, for some time at least, their desire of a relaxation of taxes seemed to intimate a sincere wish to alleviate the heavy burdens of the people. This flattering prospect disappeared under the disunion of the princes of the blood

royal. We have already said that the Regent Duke of Anjou seized upon the treasures of his brother Charles V, without having any personal title to do so; he employed them, as I will hereafter show you, in an attempt on Naples and Sicily—a purpose which proved totally useless to himself, and dangerous to France, on which it entailed a long course of disasters.

There was at this time a schism in the Roman Catholic Church; that is, two Popes had been chosen, who were acknowledged in opposition to each other by different kingdoms of the Christian world, and both of whom aspired to wield the sword and the keys of Saint Peter. The one, who assumed the name of Urban, resided at Rome; the other, under the title of Pope Clement, held his seat of church government at Avignon, in the south of France. Each had his separate college of cardinals, and each affected the power and authority of the full papal sway.

The Duke of Anjou had no great difficulty in prevailing upon the anti-pope, Clement, to declare in favour of his title to the crown of Naples and Sicily, under the bequest of Queen Joan. He did so with the greater show of authority, as he alleged that the deceased Joan had put all her dominions and seigniories at the disposal of the Church, and that, therefore, the Pope had the strongest reason for supporting and defending her subsequent bequest to the Duke of Anjou, which was made by his consent.

While, therefore, Anjou was pursuing his own

ends, the English might have made considerable, and perhaps successful efforts, for the recovery of the dominions which they had lost in France. Of these dominions, Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne, places which had to be garrisoned at a great expense, were the chief remains of Edward III's conquests which his successor retained. They were important towns, and required large garrisons. Cherbourg and Brest were also at this time in the hands of the English (A. D. 1378). That nation had been admitted into the former town by the King of Navarre, when he lost his other dominions in Normandy; and the Duke of Bretagne had given up Brest to them in the like manner, when he found that the French king was likely to expel him from his duchy.

It was after much entreaty that the English Parliament consented to the continuance of the heavy taxes necessary to the defence of these possessions, and for the maintenance of a lingering warfare, which had not been of late years gilded over either by national glory or success. They did consent, however, and their doing so was absolutely necessary to maintain the war in Bretagne; for although the duke had returned to that country, in consequence of the invitation of his subjects, who were determined to resist their subjection to the crown of France, still it was impossible that he could be successful in maintaining the independence of Bretagne or his own, without assistance from England.

A large army was therefore sent into France

by the way of Calais, under the command of the Earl of Buckingham, afterwards known as the good Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, uncle to King Richard II. This force did little more than waste the neighbourhood, after the fashion of the later English invaders; and when they advanced towards Bretagne, in which province they were destined to serve, the death of Charles V had inspired their ally, John de Montfort, with the hopes of making a separate peace with France, without embarrassing himself with the claims of his allies of England. The reason of this dereliction was, that he found his subjects, although attached to his person, and determined against subjection to France, yet equally offended with his strict alliance with England, and indisposed to admit these confederates into their strong places and castles. The duke was therefore induced to try whether he could be admitted to peace with the French government of the day by a separate treaty, now that the death of the king, who hated him personally, had removed every obstacle to his becoming connected with France as a vassal. With this view, following a policy, which was that of a perfidious age, De Montfort, on the one hand, invited the English to lay siege to Nantes, the capital town of Bretagne, assuring them that he would support them with a sufficient army; while, on the other, he negotiated for a separate peace with the authorities who had succeeded to the government of France. He found little difficulty in the execution of his

purpose; and, being received by the French into their alliance, he dictated to his late allies the English, as a measure of necessity, the evacuation of the territories of Bretagne, which they had entered at his request. It is remarkable, that notwithstanding this striking instance of perfidy, the Duke of Bretagne retained so much influence with the French and English, as to be able again to impose himself upon both in the character of a mediator.

Both these kingdoms, indeed, were at this time in a situation unfavourable alike to foreign and domestic policy, and which obliged them to submit rather to the course of events, than attempt to direct them. Charles VI of France, and Richard II of England, were both minors. Neither was of distinguished capacity, though both of good dispositions. Each was held in the management of uncles or near relations, who quarrelled among themselves, pursued their own interests, with little regard to those of their sovereign, and entirely neglected those duties which they were solemnly bound to discharge.

The condition of the two kingdoms resembled each other, like that of the sovereigns. The people, in either country, exhausted with taxation, and with all the evils of a burdensome war, had shown themselves mutinous and insubordinate; and the great insurrection of Wat Tyler and the commons of England rivalled in its horrors the Jacquerie of France, and the still-continued mutinies of Paris. In a word, the state of the

two kingdoms resembled that which is told of the hound and the deer, who exhausted themselves in a long course, until the stag became unable for a last effort at escape, while the dog was equally incapable of a final attempt to secure his prey.

Abroad, both kingdoms were embarrassed with factious neighbours,—the Flemings, for example, whose numerous and constant intestine divisions formed a temptation to the French and English to take a part in their dissensions.

Before giving an account, therefore, of the intestine discords of the princes of the blood at court, the rash expedition of the Duke of Anjou to Naples, and other matters concerning France alone, we will say something of the disorders of Flanders, in which France and England were as usual interested.

You remember the fate of Jacob d'Arteville the brewer, at one time the uncontrolled demagogue among the citizens of the great towns in Flanders, and at length slain in a tumult by the inhabitants of Ghent. This person had a son named Philip, who, undeterred by his father's fate, and possessed of his father's popular talents, contrived to raise himself to as much authority among his fellow-citizens as ever was possessed by his father, though the ally of Edward III. This was no sudden achievement. Philip d'Arteville, appalled perhaps by his father's fate, remained during early life estranged from all the objects of popular ambition, and living much as a private citizen. But a set of events were on

the eve of taking place, which tended in their consequences to call him into public view and action.

The people of Bruges, with the consent of the Earl of Flanders, had meditated certain improvements on the channel of the river Lys. This gave great umbrage to the citizens of Ghent, lest the course of the river should be interrupted; and a faction was formed in that city, distinguished by wearing white hats, at the head of which was placed John Lyon, a burgess, who had once been in great estimation with the Earl of Flanders, but now adopted the popular side, and became that prince's bitter enemy.

The wearers of the white hats rose in mutiny, defeated and killed the bailie of Ghent, who attempted to subdue them in the name of the earl, and made sallies from the town, burning the earl's castle of Andreghen. Several places in Flanders made common cause with Ghent; while the earl threatened the city with severe punishment for the loss and insults to which he had been subjected; and with that purpose he besieged, or rather blockaded, the town, with little effect. The great population of the Ghentois enabled them to keep the field, notwithstanding the displeasure of the earl; and although many citizens disapproved internally of the violence of the white hats, no burgher dared publicly dissent from their proceedings. The insurgents obtained several advantages over the earl, and even compelled him to raise the siege

of the place. Still it was apparent to wise men, that the white hats were falling in reputation; and their leader John Lyon having died under suspicion of poison, it was thought impossible to find any man of sufficient courage or influence to supply his place; and thus a severe attack from the opposite party was likely to overthrow the insurgent faction. At this crisis Philip d'Arteville emerged from obscurity, and rose to the head and management of the insurgents of Ghent, securing his authority by many acts of arbitrary power. D'Arteville was specially encouraged to the part he acted by the instigation of a subtle citizen called Peter Dubois, who, before promising him his interest in the city, thus questioned him, whether he possessed the qualities necessary for a demagogue. «Can ye bear yourself high,» said he, « and be cruel among the commons, and especially in such things as we shall have to do? A man is nothing worth, unless he be feared and dreaded, and at the same time renowned for cruelty. Thus must the Flemings be governed; and you must have no more regard for the life of man, or pity for their sufferings, than of the life of the brutes which we kill for food.» Philip d'Arteville assented to this lesson; and by the recommendation of Dubois, and the recollection of his father's original popularity, he was chosen governor of Ghent, and leader of the insurgents in Flanders.

Thus were the Earl of Flanders, and the citizens of his towns, once more in open arms

against each other. The French, espousing, as formerly, the cause of the Earl of Flanders, dispatched forces to his assistance; and the English government, though distracted by domestic confusion, failed not, as usual, to send to Calais an army, to assist D'Arteville and the insurgent citizens.

The French prince, who had the greatest personal interest in this revolt of Flanders, was Philip, Duke of Burgundy, son-in-law and heir to the earl of that country. To him, therefore, the Earl of Flanders naturally carried his complaint, stating, that these traitors, the insurgents of Ghent, his own native liegemen, had destroyed the house in which he was born, broken to pieces the font in which he was christened, done him every manner of despite, and were now likely to ruin his remaining heritage. In all this the Duke of Burgundy saw the necessary desolation of a heritage that should one day be his own, and therefore, having much influence in the administration of France, he resolved that the king his nephew, and all his peers, should march into Flanders, and fight against those insurgent burgesses, who were likely to lay that fine country entirely waste, or declare it independent of its earl and his nobility. Accordingly, the King of France, under the guidance of his uncle, the Duke of Burgundy, marched into Flanders, at the head of eighty thousand men.

The war was conducted with great vigour on the part of the French. Yet Philip d'Arteville,

on this trying occasion, showed both dexterity and courage. From Ghent and the confederate towns he collected a numerous army. Those who fought under him were arrayed in cassocks of different colours, to mark the various towns they belonged to; they were armed chiefly with pikes, and fought entirely on foot, forming one main battalion or division. Their captain, D'Arteville, alone kept a good horse beside him, not for the purpose of flight, but for that of following the French in the chase, which, he doubted not, would be the consequence of the battle. The country, divided by rivers and canals, was favourable to the Flemings.

After some lesser skirmishes, the two armies encountered each other in a pitched battle near the town of Rosebecque (A. D. 1381, Nov. 27). The Flemings, for a time, made a most desperate and gallant defence; but as they were attacked by the flower of the French chivalry, headed by the princes of the blood, and by the king in person, the insurgents were at length broken by the charge of the horses and lances. As the knights and men-at-arms gave no quarter to an enemy, whom they reckoned so inferior to themselves, twenty-five thousand men were left slain upon the field. Philip d'Arteville fell bravely fighting; and the victory was so well improved, that most of the towns which had been in insurrection, submitted peaceably to the dominion of France, though Ghent still held out.

Shortly after he had been thus replaced in his

dominions, Louis, Count of Flanders, died, and the Duke of Burgundy became established as a very great prince, enjoying not only his deceased father-in-law's seigniories, which comprehended the whole country of Flanders, but his own dominions of Burgundy and Artois,—forming together a strong, compact, and powerful principality, which, though now its lord was so nearly connected with the crown of France as to be its principal regent, became in after times a dreaded enemy of that power.

About this time, the King of France, by the advice of the Duke of Burgundy, was wedded to a beautiful German princess, Isabella, daughter of the Duke of Bavaria. It was remarkable that the young prince declined acceding to the match, until, contrary to the usage of princes, he was permitted to see the princess to whom he was to be betrothed. He was delighted with her external beauty, but had no means of perceiving the bad qualities of the mind which was lodged in so beautiful a form. Meanwhile the duke took the opportunity of the king's German match, to make an advantageous bargain for his own son with the daughter and heiress of Albert, Count of Zealand, Hainault, and Holland, affording the prospect of a succession which might make a formidable addition to the dominions of Burgundy and Flanders.

From the bloody field of Rosebecque, in which the power of the insurgent Flemings had been broken, the young King of France hurried back

to his own capital of Paris, which had been for a considerable time more or less in mutiny against him, as formerly against his father Charles V. The Parisians had rendered their city in some degree tenable by building walls, digging trenches, drawing barricades across the street, and thus impeding the entrance of the military; and they themselves had assumed the title of maillotins, or malleters, from the mallets with which they were generally armed. In order to overawe the young king, they displayed before him this force, amounting to thirty thousand men; but, instead of being daunted, Charles was provoked by their assuming an appearance of menace, and, despising their numbers, entered his capital as if by force of arms, and seized, without scruple, upon two or three hundred leaders of the malleters, several of whom were put to death for some successive days, in requital of former acts of insubordination. The gates of the city were also pulled down, the citizens disarmed, and the insurrection for the time was effectually subdued.

England, weakened as it was by external losses and internal mutiny, was still too powerful not to be appealed to during these times of confusion. When the Flemings were in insurrection, the English, though they ridiculed the idea of giving them pecuniary assistance, which D'Arteville required, were yet disposed to send troops to the continent, to avail themselves of the general confusion.

With this view, two propositions were made to the British Parliament. By the one, John of Gaunt, on receiving an allowance of forty thousand pounds, or thereabouts, declared himself willing to undertake an expedition into Castile; but as the purpose of this must have been a conquest for his own benefit, without any corresponding national advantage, the Parliament declined entering upon this proposal, which was afterwards, however, unfortunately resumed.

They were more willing to listen to a proposal made by the Bishop of Norwich, for the support of the Flemings. This military prelate had already distinguished himself by quelling some insurrections in his own bishopric. He now offered his services, upon certain terms, of money to be paid, to raise three thousand men-at-arms and three thousand archers, which he proposed to transport to Calais, and there act in behalf of the Flemings. This was also in some measure a religious undertaking; for the warlike bishop, who declared stoutly for the rights of Pope Urban in the schism of the church, made it a principal object of his expedition, to remove his competitor Clement, whom he held to be an anti-pope, from the city of Avignon. The nobles of England thought well of this enterprise of the bishop; but while they were in deliberation upon the subject, the battle of Rosebecque was fought, in which D'Arteville was killed, and his army of insurgents totally defeated, whereby the whole country of Flanders fell to the French interest,

which was naturally embraced by the Duke of Burgundy, son-in-law and successor of the last earl, Louis of Flanders. Then, indeed, the English government blamed their own indecision, and began to censure each other for not having sent timely succours to D'Arteville. « Had these poor Flemings,» they said, « who fought so well in their own rude manner, been joined by but two thousand English spears and six thousand archers, not a Frenchman would have escaped death or captivity. But there is a good time to come. The French king has conquered Flanders; we will conquer it again for Richard of England.» This species of reasoning induced many distinguished men, as Sir Hugh Calverley and others, to join the expedition under the Bishop of Norwich, although its chance of success was greatly diminished by the defeat of Rosebecque.

The martial prelate took the sea accordingly, and landed at Calais the 23d day of April, 1383. When the English arrived at this place, the Bishop of Norwich was in great haste to move against the Earl of Flanders; although, strictly speaking, his commission limited him to attack and destroy those only who owned Clement as the Pope. Some disputes there were upon this subject; but the fiery prelate was not to be restrained by remonstrances, nor disposed to limit his commission to the letter. He defeated an army of thirty thousand French and Flemings, in the French interest, and made himself master of

Gravelines and Dunkirk, Burburgh, and several other towns; and besieged Ypres, which was valiantly defended. The besiegers sent to the people of Ghent, who had still, notwithstanding the defeat at Rosebecque, remained in insurrection against the Earl of Flanders; and as they joyfully obeyed the summons, and came in large numbers, with great hope of success, the siege was closely pressed. The King of France, therefore, instigated by the Duke of Burgundy, his uncle, assembled an army of twenty thousand men-at-arms, and more than threescore thousand of other troops, for the purpose of relieving Ypres.

This news alarmed the bishop, whose force was too weak to abide the arrival of such an army. The siege was raised in such haste and disorder, that the besiegers took different routes to secure themselves; some marching towards Burburgh, under Sir Hugh Calverley and Sir Thomas Trivet; and the rest of the army, under the personal command of the bishop, retreating towards Gravelines. The party under Calverley halted for some time at the town of Bergues. The French host approached them just after they had occupied the place. « It was beautiful,» says Froissart, « to behold this royal armament, their banners and pennons flying, their spears and helmets glistening against the sun, their number so great that it could not be ascertained, and their spears appearing like a thick wood!» Sir Hugh Calverley was at first inclined to have

fought the French at Bergues, disdaining all difference of numbers; but, on better reflections, withdrew to the town of Burburgh, which was stronger, though unfortunately the houses were most of them thatched, and thus liable to be set on fire.

Here the party of English defended themselves valiantly for some time, until the King of France ordered a great number of fagots for filling the ditches of the place, as one determined to carry it by storm. A small piece of silver, called a blank, was paid to each peasant who should bring a fagot, and on these terms the ditches were soon filled. In this extremity, the English leaders were glad to compound for permission to evacuate the place safely, and return to Calais. Gravelines, whither the greater part of the English had retired, and where the bishop commanded in person, was surrendered in like manner, and on the same conditions as Burburgh.

This expedition of the Bishop of Norwich gave little satisfaction to the English; and though it certainly was not more useless than most of those which had lately been undertaken in France, the bishop underwent both censure and fine for its bad success. John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, was rather pleased than otherwise with the unfortunate issue of the Bishop of Norwich's attempt; yet he might have learned, from the fate of the Duke of Anjou, whose situation in the court of France nearly resembled his own in that of England, that he might be a loser, rather

than a gainer, by the enterprise which he himself meditated, even if he had succeeded in the commencement. The following is a brief account of the Neapolitan expedition, which we have postponed till now, though it actually took place so early as 1382:—The Duke of Anjou, I have told you, had made free with the treasures of his brother Charles V, in order to support the claim of succession, which the Pope and the Queen Joan had given him in Sicily and Naples. Dazzled with the prospect of a kingdom, he unwarily sacrificed the real power which he possessed as Regent of France, for the romantic project of making himself a king in Italy. His brother, the Duke of Burgundy, who expected to succeed him as regent, encouraged him in his desperate enterprise.

The Duke of Anjou employed the wealth which he had acquired, in levying an army, which, in the days when the Free Companies were everywhere to be found, was, while there were funds to pay them, a matter of much ease. He acquired the aid of the Earl of Savoy, who joined Anjou with a considerable body of his followers. In his progress through Sicily, the French prince coined money, and assumed the titles of King of Naples, of Sicily, and Jerusalem, Duke of Apulia and of Calabria. On the other hand, his competitor, Charles de Durazzo, as nearest heir of Queen Joan, claimed her kingdom as his inheritance, and his title was affirmed by Pope Urban on similar grounds to those

which moved his rival Clement to prefer that of the Duke of Anjou.

This prince had no means of withstanding such an army as that led by the Duke of Anjou. Upon his first arrival, therefore, in full strength, he resolved to avoid fighting, and watch the course of events. He saw with considerable equanimity his country laid waste, and the city of Naples possessed by his rival. Charles of Durazzo, however, being satisfied in his own mind that the wealth of the Duke of Anjou must, in a short time, be exhausted, and his army disbanded for want of supplies, continued to protract the struggle.

Accordingly, the necessity of paying and supporting an army, which consisted of fifty thousand men at least, soon exhausted all the treasures which the Duke of Anjou had been able to collect. His rival exercised effectually the arts of Italian policy, and, by prolix negotiation, amused the Frenchman with personal challenges which he never designed to fulfil; so that at length, his army being almost totally dissolved, and his treasures entirely exhausted, Louis of Anjou died of depressed spirits and disappointed hopes, at the village of Bari, the 10th of October, 1383. Charles of Durazzo, that he might seem to carry on his dissimulation, even after the death of his rival, wore mourning for thirty days for the death of his competitor and mortal enemy—after which he took possession of his crown.

It is said, that the ultimate cause of Anjou's

ruin was a faithless follower, entitled Peter Craon, a Breton noble, afterwards frequently, but unhappily, distinguished in French history. He was a man of talent and social habits, for which he was highly valued at the profligate court of France. This Craon had followed the Duke of Anjou to Italy, and, in his necessities, that prince sent him to bring some supplies of money, which he had left in France under the charge of his princess. The false emissary obtained the money; but, instead of bringing it back, as the count had enjoined him, he spent it at Venice in profligate, riotous, and expensive pleasures. Having, notwithstanding, ventured back to Paris after the Duke of Anjou's decease, Craon fell at first under the displeasure of the king, and was severely fined for breach of trust; but afterwards, by the arts proper to such parasites, he recovered the favour of the court, and again had confidence reposed in him, which put in his power once more the means of abusing and betraying it.

About this time, the Duke of Bretagne, who had borne arms in the camp of the King of France during the expedition of the Bishop of Norwich, ventured to make his appearance in the character of negotiator of a peace between France and England—a character somewhat singularly assumed by one who, like John de Montfort, had been unfaithful to both kingdoms. Neither, however, were prepared, by the course of events, to submit to moderate terms; and while the

English refused to hold in vassalage of France the few places which they still retained in that kingdom, the French were equally unwilling that a foreign nation should enjoy even the slightest independent possession on their soil. No solid terms of peace, therefore, could be adjusted between the contending powers.

In the meantime, France, more especially its south-western provinces, continued to suffer from the Free Companies, or bands of armed men, of whom I have often told you before; they owned no king or country, but assembled in towns and castles, where they made their living by force, and at the expense of the neighbourhood. Many of them, we have seen, rose from being captains of such robbers—for such was their true description—into knights and generals of great consequence. I think, however, you will better understand the character of this sort of persons, and conceive the scourge they must have been to a peaceful country, by a short account of the history and death of two of their number.

The province of Auvergne was particularly haunted by this banditti, because it abounds with passes, rocks, hills, and strong-holds, of which the Free Companions knew admirably how to take advantage in war. Several of the most renowned leaders had settled themselves there, for the same reason that a mountainous region is peopled by eagles, hawks, and other birds of prey, to whom it affords opportunities

of rapine, and means of concealment. Two of these freebooters were distinguished above the others by their courage, intelligence, and activity; their names (at least the epithets by which they were distinguished in the wars), were Amergot Marcell, and Geoffrey Tête-noir, that is, Black-head. They both professed to espouse the English cause; but it may be supposed that they only chose it because it afforded the most unlimited privilege of plunder. Froissart's account of the death of these two celebrated Companions is one of the most picturesque passages of his lively work, and will make you better acquainted with the lawless men who existed in that distracted time, than a long dissertation of mine.

Geoffrey Tête-noir obtained, by bribing a domestic, the means of obtaining possession, for himself and company, of the strong castle of Ventadour, belonging to an aged earl of that name, a quiet, peaceful man, whom the robbers dismissed without injury: such, indeed, had been the bargain of his treacherous squire, who surrendered the place. Geoffrey Tête-noir here prosecuted his profession with great success. « He was a hardy man, » says the historian, « who knew neither fear nor pity, and would put to death a knight or squire as soon as a peasant, for he cared for no one; and he was so much dreaded by his men, that none dared displease him. » This chieftain assembled a band of four hundred men, to whom he paid high wages monthly with the utmost regularity. He protected the country

around Ventadour, so that no one dared make incursions upon the territory. In his castle he held a kind of open market, where goods and furniture, cloth of Brussels, peltry and mercery, with iron and steel ware, leather, and other commodities, were to be found as plentiful as in the city of Paris. The castle was fully victualled for a siege, had it been to last seven years. Nay, occasionally, to show his independence, Tête-noir chose to make war on the English as well as the French; and this jovial course of life he led for many years, more dreaded than any lawful authority in the country where he lived.

But when the French interest began to recover itself in these districts, the nobles and knights united themselves together for the purpose of besieging the forts and castles of which these robbers had possession, and delivering the country, by fair means or by force, from these lawless companions.

Accordingly, Sir William Lignac, Sir John Bon-lance, and many others, knights of Auvergne and of the district of the Limosin, formed the siege of Ventadour, for the safety of which Tête-noir was no way distressed, having plenty of ammunition and provisions. But one day, as he was heading his men in a sally, he received a crossbow-shot in the face. The medical persons thought that the wound was unattended with danger, had the patient observed the regimen prescribed; but he was a free-living person, unwont to self-denial of any kind. The conse-

quence of his careless course was, that the wound proved mortal. When Geoffrey Tête-noir felt himself very ill, he summoned the principal officers of his Free Company to his dying bed. He reminded them that he had long been their true captain, and, being now about to die, was desirous to see them unite to chuse a chieftain in his stead, who might be able to defend this strong and well-furnished castle, until the French should raise the siege. « I have served,» he added, « chiefly under the shadow of the King of England, holding the service to be one in which there is much to be got, and you will do well to chuse one who shall follow the same policy.» The Companions heard their commander's words in silence, and when they answered, it was to offer to Tête-noir the choice of his successor. Having named a kinsman of his own to this office, the patient proceeded to make his will; and it was one which, while it shows the wealth acquired by such people, is a curious evidence of their superstition, and their wild and irregular ideas of property, even when it was their own. « In yonder chest,» said the dying brigand, « are thirty thousand marks. I will give them according to my conscience. First, to the chapel of Saint George, in this castle, fifteen hundred marks, to be spent in repairing the same; next, to my mistress, who has truly and faithfully attended me, two thousand five hundred francs; to Allan Roux, whom I have named your captain, four thousand francs; five hundred to the varlets

of my chamber; fifteen hundred to the officers of my household; the rest I give and bequeath thus:—Ye be about thirty Companions, all of one band; ye ought to be brethren, without debate, anger, or strife among you. Having paid these legacies, I will that you divide the residue of the money, which you shall find in yonder chest, truly and equally among you thirty. But if you be not content with my bequest, and that the devil do set debate amongst you, there stands a stout axe, break up the coffer, scramble for the money, and get it who can!» The residuary legatees replied, that as they had always regarded their captain, while living, with love and awe, so they would follow his behests when dead.

They continued to respect Geoffrey's testament after his death. But his successor Allan Roux, being surprised in a piece of intended treachery, was put to the sword, and the castle of Ventadour taken.

The history of Amergot Marcell, whom we have mentioned as a brother in the trade of war, and an occasional partner of Tête-noir, gives us a similar picture of their life. This worthy had, in like manner, acquired the strong castle of Aloys, in Auvergne; from it he made many successful inroads upon the country, which produced him a revenue of twenty thousand florins. But about the time of Tête-noir's death, the Earl of Armagnac, and several French lords, were commissioned to get these robbers out of the country by bribery, if that should be neces-

sary, since force was a doubtful and dangerous remedy. Marcell was after a time persuaded that he had better accept the offer made him, renounce his unlawful and violent proceedings, and, by means of the treasure he had acquired, live in future a peaceful life. In these sentiments, he delivered up to the Earl of Armagnac the castle of Aloys, situated in the very heart of Auvergne.

But when he had resigned this strong-hold, he began to repent of having done so, and of having adopted reformed courses. He felt that there was a diminution of the respect and awe which he formerly inspired whenever his name was pronounced. The brigand is said to have lamented his change of condition to the old companions of his rapine; and his recollections, as delivered by the historian, give a lively picture of his successful robberies.

« To pillage and rob,» he said, « all things considered, was a good life;» and so he repented him of his good resolutions, and thus addressed his old companions:—« Sirs, there is no sport or glory in this world among men of war, but to use such life as we have done in time past. What a joy was it to us when we rode forth at adventure, and sometimes found by the way a rich prior or merchant, or a route of mules of Montpelier, of Narbonne, of Toulouse, or of Carcassonne, laden with Brussels cloth, or with furs coming from the fairs, or of spicery ware from Bruges, from Damascus, from Alexandria! What-

ever we met, all was ours, or else ransomed at our pleasure. Then, for our living, the peasants of Limosin daily brought to our castle, wheat-flour, ready-baked bread, forage for our horses, good wines, beeves and fat sheep, pullets and wild fowl. We were furnished as though we had been kings; when we rode forth, the whole country trembled for fear; all was ours, going and coming. How we took Carlushe, and James the Bourge of Compiegne; and how I and Perot of Bernoys took Chalucet! How did we scale with little aid the strong castle of Marquel, and how I received in ransom thereof five thousand francs, told down on a fair table, and showed my gentleness by forgiving another thousand, for respect to the dauphin's children! By my faith, this was a fair and a good life! and I repute myself sore deceived when I rendered up the fortress of Aloys; since, well victualled as it was, I could have kept it against all the world.»

Marcell's regret for the license of his early life naturally led to his resuming his former profession. It would be useless to trace his further exploits, though they are singular enough. His mode of life was rendered more difficult by the close alliance of the French knights, which, as we have already noticed, had for its object the suppression of the Companies. Nor did the English afford him any effectual support, there being a truce between the kingdoms at the time. At length he intrusted himself to the confidence of one of his kinsmen called Turnemine, who de-

livered him up to the French. When he was brought to Paris, Marcell offered threescore thousand francs for his ransom. The cold reply was, that the king was rich enough. The brigand was dragged on a cart to the Halles, and, being first exposed on the pillory, was afterwards hanged and quartered, his quarters being placed over the gates of the city. These two leaders of banditti, their sentiments, and their fate, may serve to give you some idea of the life they led, and the manner in which France was finally relieved of them.

To return to our history. The Duke of Lancaster, in the meantime, had, by his extensive influence, obtained at length the great but ill-placed object of his ambition, and had sailed with twenty thousand English troops, to make good his claim to the kingdom of Castile, lately possessed by his father-in-law, Pedro the Cruel. It may be enough to say of his adventures in Spain and Portugal, that his troops maintained the character of the English for bravery; and acquired, as has been their usual fate, little or no advantage to their country from their brilliant exploits. The unhealthy climate, and intemperate use of the wines and fruits of the country, spread contagious diseases among them. But when we remember that port wine is now a general, and supposed a healthy beverage, for Englishmen of the higher and middling ranks, we cannot suppress a smile when we read Froissart's assurances, that the hot and fiery wines of

Oporto were fatally noxious to the English of his day, who were accustomed only to drink the light and generous wines of Gascony, or the mild ale of their own country.

It occurred to the French king and his courtiers, that when the realm of England might be supposed exhausted by the mutinies of the peasants, and the two expeditions under the Bishop of Norwich and John of Gaunt, the proper season had arrived for transferring the war into the territory of England. On this, as on later occasions, the preparations for invasion were made to a cumbrous, rather than useful extent, and with great and unnecessary splendour. Upwards of seven hundred ships were prepared to transport the large army which was collected for this enterprise; the frame of a wooden town was put on board, which was designed to be taken to pieces, and carried from place to place for the king's lodging, should he attend the expedition. The severe equinoctial storms of 1386 destroyed this great fleet of transports, which had rendezvoused in the harbour of Sluyse. The king showed his favour to his uncle, the Duke of Burgundy, by bestowing upon him the harbour of Sluyse itself, and the various wrecks with which the tempest had filled it, including the fragments of the great wooden town already mentioned.

About the same period, the affairs of Bretagne began again to assume peculiar interest. John de Montfort, Duke of Bretagne, whom we have

so often mentioned as a man of bravery and talent, had a difficult part to play between France and England, and might, therefore, have been taught prudence by his situation. Yet, on the present occasion, he ventured upon a line of conduct which would have been destructive to him, had circumstances permitted the French king to have driven the matter to extremity.

You cannot have forgotten the long wars betwixt John de Montfort and his parents, on the one side, and Charles de Blois, on the other. Among the greatest opponents of De Montfort, in his claim on the dukedom of Bretagne, was Oliver de Clisson, a Breton lord, now Constable of France. The constable's zeal was the more provoking, that in the beginning of these disorders, he had been a partisan of the house of De Montfort; but long since that time he had espoused the cause of Charles de Blois, and fought for him in the battle of Aurai, in which Charles was slain. Oliver de Clisson, after that battle, had ransomed, at his own cost, two sons of Charles de Blois, the eldest of whom had married Clisson's daughter. This young lord, with consent, as might be supposed, of his father-in-law, still continued to display the arms of Bretagne on his banners and in his scutcheon, and in so far, at least, to assert his claim to the duchy, in maintaining which his father was slain at Aurai. The duke was so displeased with this implied challenge of his right, that he resolved to be avenged in any manner, however discreditable

to himself, which might place the constable in his power. For this purpose, he issued an invitation to all the nobility and lords of Bretagne, and especially to the Constable of France, Oliver de Clisson, to meet him at a solemn entertainment, with which he proposed to regale them. Having feasted them for some time, the duke, as if to procure their opinion of the structure, carried them to see a castle by the sea-shore, which he was just building, and which he called the castle of Ermyne. The constable, entering the tower at the duke's request, was instantly laid hold of, secured, and loaded with irons. His brother-in-law, the Lord Delaval, who saw the gate of the tower shut suddenly, and observed by the duke's change of complexion, that something remarkable had happened, threw himself upon his knees, and demanded mercy for the gentle constable. « Are you willing to share his fate?» answered the duke, obviously in a high passion. «I am,» answered Lord Delaval, in more anxiety for his friend, than apprehension for himself. « Then,» said the duke, drawing his dagger, « you must be content to lose one of your eyes, for Clisson has but one.» (He lost the other, it must be observed, at the battle of Aurai.) After a moment, however, the duke abstained from the violence which he threatened, and caused Delaval to be apprehended, saying, that he should have neither worse nor better treatment than his friend. He was led, accordingly, into a prison-chamber, and loaded, as was

the constable himself, with three pairs of irons. The Lord Delaval continued to make intercession for the constable; and though the duke repeatedly threatened to put both his prisoners to death, he had the good fortune to divert him from his purpose. Finally, the duke accepted of a ransom, amounting to the large sum of one hundred thousand francs, besides three castles, and the town of Guyon.

It was the opinion of the Bretons in general, that the true purpose of this violence on the duke's part, was to reconcile himself with the English, whom he had lately displeased by his desertion of the Duke of Buckingham, yet without whose support he must have felt it difficult to maintain the character of independence which he affected as Duke of Bretagne.

The consequence of the constable's arrest in Bretagne, depriving the king of France of that great officer, upon whose wisdom he chiefly rested for the successful execution of his project against England, must necessarily have interrupted the progress of the invasion; but, as you have already heard, the tempestuous weather put an end to that expedition, by destroying the transports. The duke, however, contrived to reconcile himself with the King of France, at the expense of returning the sum he had extorted as the ransom for Clisson, and giving up the castles which he had received from him.

CHAPTER XII.

Charles VI assumes the Government into his own hands—his Choice of Councillors—Attempt of Peter de Craon to assassinate Oliver de Clisson, Constable of France—the Assassin takes refuge in Bretagne, whose Duke, De Montfort, had been privy to his design—King Charles, in marching towards Bretagne, to avenge himself upon the intended Murderer, is struck with Insanity, whereupon the Expedition is abandoned—Accident at a Masque, in which the King, during one of his lucid intervals, performed a part—The Duke of Burgundy appointed Regent, in opposition to the Claims of the Duke of Orleans—Burgundy drives Oliver de Clisson from court, who retires to Bretagne, and engages in a War with De Montfort—Peace concluded between them — De Montfort's Death, leaving Clisson Guardian of his Children—Clisson's honourable Conduct in that capacity—his Death—Administration of the Duke of Burgundy—Assistance afforded by France to the Scots—Expedition to protect Hungary from the Turks—the French and Hungarians defeated by the Sultan Bajazet near Nicopolis — Massacre of the Prisoners—State of France at the Close of the Fourteenth Century.

THE next year (A. D. 1387) was well advanced, when the French king, Charles VI, took upon himself the government of his kingdom. He assembled, for this purpose, a council at Rheims, whither he called his uncles, the Dukes of Berri, Burgundy, and Bourbon, and, expressing his

grateful thanks for the services they had rendered him, declared himself in future determined to govern his kingdom by the assistance of a council of state, the members of which were to be selected by himself.

The nation were not sorry to see that none of the young king's uncles, except the Duke of Bourbon, were included in the list of privy councillors. The Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, however, both of whom were ambitious men, though Burgundy alone was an able one, were highly offended at being thus excluded from power. The king himself, as far as the character of so young a man could be guessed at, possessed the most promising dispositions. His education, however, had been neglected; and, as was probably the policy of his uncle, who wished to keep him detached from business, he had contracted an extravagant passion for hunting, and other youthful exercises, together with a love of public show and festivities, inconsistent with the economy which the state of the nation highly demanded. These failings, added to untoward circumstances, and to a melancholy alteration in the state of his health, rendered Charles VI one of the most unfortunate princes that ever sat upon the throne of France, even though he had been preceded by the vanquished Philip and the captive John. In the commencement of his reign, however, these defects were far from being visible. He was attentive to business, careful to render justice to

those who presented petitions to him, liberal in the remission of taxes, active in his administration, and so amiable in his general deportment, as to acquire the surname of Charles the Well-beloved.

In this the happiest period of his reign, the death of the Duchess of Orleans enabled him to bestow the title, and the province itself, upon his only brother, whom he had determined to raise to a rank befitting the love which he bore to him.

The principal officer whom Charles VI employed, and whom he valued as much for his civil as for his warlike qualities, was the Breton lord, Oliver de Clisson, often mentioned as Constable of France, and whom, perhaps, the king valued the more, from being conscious that his greatness and wealth arose entirely from distinguished merit, without being the result of high birth. For the same reason, the king's uncles, seeing a person whom they regarded as an upstart, rise into a confidence with their royal nephew, from which they were excluded, entertained a deep hatred for Clisson, which displayed itself on several occasions; and these princes are, therefore, supposed to have aided the Duke of Bretagne in escaping, so easily as he did, from the consequences of his treacherous attack upon the constable's person, at the castle of Ermyne, and to have been at the bottom of a foul attempt to assassinate him, which took place shortly afterwards.

The agent in this vile deed, which was the too frequent vice of that barbarous age, was the same Peter Craon, formerly remarkable as having been the confidant of Louis of Anjou, to whom he proved faithless, and incurred a fine and censure, notwithstanding which, he had contrived to enter once more into some credit at the court of France. Craon, a bold, meddling, and intriguing person, had acquired so much intimacy with the Duke of Touraine, afterwards Orleans, the king's brother, that he had an opportunity of abusing it, which it was not in his nature to omit. The king, who understood that Craon had been disturbing the peace of his court, by fetching and carrying tales betwixt the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, intimated his displeasure by a sentence of banishment from court. Craon retired into Bretagne, of which duchy he was a native, and where he had property, full of indignation against the constable; and reckoning with security that he would have the countenance of the Duke of Bretagne, in any enterprise which he might form against that officer. It was not without the knowledge of this prince, that Peter Craon made a desperate attempt to assassinate the constable; and we must lament the inconsistency of mankind, when we find that John de Montfort, who had acquired the title of the Valiant, and who, in the field of Aurai, wept in the moment of victory over the hereditary foe by whose death he became Duke of Bretagne, could,

notwithstanding, become accessary to so base and cowardly a conspiracy.

Though banished from Paris, Peter Craon had still, like other persons attendant on the court, a house of his own, which he caused to be privately supplied with armour for forty men. In the meantime he introduced into the house, at different times, a like number of persons, the most desperate ruffians whom he could find in a country where long war had made such characters too abundant. At last he joined them suddenly himself, and commanded the porter to let no person either in or out till his pleasure was known. On the same evening there was a great entertainment at court, upon which Craon kept a close watch, in order to be apprised of the motions of his victim. The knights jousted in presence of the king and queen; supper was served; dancing ensued; at length all departed to their lodgings. As Constable of France, Clisson departed last of all. He asked if he should attend upon the Duke of Orleans longer, and was dismissed by that prince, who had no farther occasion for his service. The constable was then joined by his retinue, with his horses; and with eight persons and two torches, pursued his way through what was then called the street of Saint Catherine's. Here Craon waited, with his band of assassins, to execute his purpose. They attacked the unsuspicious passenger, and struck out the torches. The constable naturally

took this sudden assault to be a youthful frolic on the part of the Duke of Orleans, from whom he had just parted, and said, « Ah! sir, this is a bad jest; but I pardon your youth and love of frolic.» At this Peter Craon drew his sword, and cried, « Down with the constable! I am Peter of Craon, whom thou hast often injured; I will now have amends!» Excited by their master's cries, Peter Craon's men struck at the constable and his party; yet it was but faintly, « for,» says the chronicler, « what is done by treason is seldom done hardily.» The good knight whose life was the object of this treachery defended himself manfully with a sword scarce two feet in length, the only weapon which he had, and warded off many blows; at length he was beat down by a severe stroke on the head, and fell against a baker's door, which was forced open by his weight, and the baker, who was up early to attend to his oven, drew the wounded man within his house, so that the ruffians could not have finished their work without alighting, which they had not time to do. The assailants were the readier to make their escape, that they conceived, from the constable's fall, that their enterprise was fully executed. The city was speedily roused; and the king himself hastened to the spot, with a cloak around him, and slippers on his feet. He instantly ordered a hot pursuit after the assassins, which was undertaken by the provost of Paris. Notwithstanding this, Peter of Craon escaped by the gate of the city which

had been dismantled by Oliver Clisson himself, when the king, returning from the campaign of Rosebecque, punished the city of Paris. The assassin afterwards retired into Bretagne; and the king prepared to march into that country, as well to revenge himself of Peter Craon, who had been guilty of such an outrage, as to chastise the Duke of Bretagne, his protector.

Clisson, though much hurt, recovered from his wounds, although he thought his end so near, as to make his testament. This was esteemed an extremely impolitic step, as he thereby confirmed reports which were current respecting the immense wealth which he had amassed, and greatly increased the odium in which he was held on that account. His property was said to amount to seventeen millions of francs, without putting any value on his lands and lordships, forming a strong contrast to the honest poverty of Bertrand du Guesclin, Clisson's predecessor in his high office.

In the meantime the intended murderer met with but a sorry reception from John de Montfort; not because he had attempted the deed, but because it was not fully executed. «Ah! Sir Peter of Craon,» said the duke, «you are unhappy, that you could not slay your enemy when he lay under your sword!»—«Sir,» answered Craon, «I think all the devils had conjured him out of my hands! I am sure more than sixty blows were struck at him with swords and javelins; he was felled from his horse; and had

he not tumbled in at a half-open door, he had been but a dead man.» The Duke of Bretagne answered, « that as it was so, he would conceal Sir Peter of Craon, since so far he had promised to aid him.»

It was highly natural that the king should endeavour to avenge so gross and cruel an outrage; but the offenders had friends about the king's family and person. Accordingly, though on one hand Charles urged, as an article of treason on the part of the Duke of Bretagne, that he had sheltered an assassin under the circumstances of Peter de Craon, and persisted in his purpose of bringing both the murderer and his abettors to condign punishment; on the other, the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy would have had the matter considered as a mere brawl between two Breton lords, with which the King of France might dispense with intermeddling. The king, notwithstanding this opposition, vowed to be revenged for the foul injury which he had sustained in the person of his constable.

The king accordingly marched to the city of Mans, with the intention of entering Bretagne, having with him his uncles of Berri and Burgundy, and his brother of Orleans, at the head of a gallant army, with which he resolved to penetrate into Bretagne, and obtain full compensation for the crime meditated, and imperfectly committed, by Peter of Craon.

The march of the king was interrupted by a very singular circumstance, at which we must be

contented to wonder, without pretending to account for it. For some days ere Charles set out from Mans on this expedition, he had betrayed evident symptoms of occasional derangement, —the apparent effects of a slow fever, excited by vexation at the attempt upon Clisson, and the extreme heat of the weather. No persuasion, however, could induce him to relinquish the expedition against Bretagne, and he set off with his army in the manner already mentioned. Charles himself rode like a man-at-arms of the day, fully sheathed in mail, except his head, and having two pages bearing before him his helmet and his lance. The armour, being covered with black velvet, chafed and heated him excessively. His brother, his uncles, and one or two principal persons of the army, attended immediately on his person. As he thus rode forward under a burning sun, he himself being in a moody fit, a tall figure dressed in rags, and hideous in appearance, rushed out of a thicket, and, seizing the king's bridle, exclaimed, in a singular tone of voice, «King, whither goest thou? Thou art betrayed!» What this man was, or to what purpose his wild warning was given, it is difficult to conjecture. The king's servants, who paid nc attention to his words, suffered him to escape into the thicket, after having dealt several blows at him. He was nowhere afterwards seen, which induced the superstitious to believe him a supernatural apparition. In the meantime, the army emerged from the forest, and entered

a broad plain, where the sun, at the height of noon, was still more oppressive than before. Here the pages with the spear and helmet rode close behind the king, and his uncles, the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, with other high nobles, kept at a little distance, to be free of the columns of dust which arose from the tramp of so many horses. In these circumstances, the page that bore the spear falling asleep, or through negligence, allowing the lance to drop upon the casque of him who bore the king's helmet, that slight accident was enough to produce a great catastrophe. The king was weakened in mind by his fever, exhausted by the heat of the sun, and by the weight of his armour, which was a habiliment most unfit for the season. Above all, the appearance and words of what seemed to be a phantom, had sunk deeper into his imagination than those around him were aware. It was but lately since he had been called up from his bed, alarmed by a conflict at the gates of his palace, in which his highest military officer narrowly escaped with life; and in times when such things currently happened, slighter warnings than that of the unknown stranger might have alarmed nerves less shattered than those of Charles VI.

In this situation, the clash of the spear, and the glittering of the armour around, were sufficient to awaken him out of his dreaming melancholy into a fit of raving madness. He drew his sword, and, rushing like a madman on the page

who had caused the noise, struck him a mortal blow, and continued hewing at all around him with so little distinction, that it became obvious he was wholly deranged. There was no other remedy but to seize upon him by main force, disarm and bind him, and in this unhappy condition to convey him back to Mans, bound with ropes, and transported in a cart, exhausted with his frantic effort, speechless, motionless, and almost lifeless.

This was a melancholy conclusion of the expedition to Bretagne, all thoughts of prosecuting which were abandoned. The king's fury, as already noticed, gave way to a fit of the most powerless dejection; he neither moved, looked, nor spoke; and a low pulse, and faint degree of warmth, alone indicated the remains of life. He recovered, indeed, after some weeks' illness; but both mind and body had received such a shock, as was never afterwards repaired.

It appears doubtful what we are to think of the tale of the forest of Mans. The scene of the apparition was acted near to a lazaretto for the abode of persons afflicted with leprosy; and the phantom may perhaps, therefore, have been some crazy patient of that melancholy asylum. It has, however, been supposed that the whole was a device of the Duke of Burgundy, who, in the event of the king's incapacity, was most likely to succeed to the administration of the kingdom, having formerly exercised it. It is thus far certain, that Burgundy was greatly dissatisfied with

the object of the king's journey; for he hated Clisson, and considered him as the person by whose advice, he himself, and his brother the Duke of Berri, had been excluded from influence ever since Charles personally assumed the management of public affairs. The same Duke of Burgundy, at a period somewhat later, accused the king's sister-in-law, the Duchess of Orleans, of being, by enchantment, the authoress of the king's malady. She was an Italian, daughter of Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, beautiful, accomplished, and possessed of high talent; and it would have been indeed ungrateful in her to have been guilty of any harm to the king, who showed her, in his greatest fits of insanity, a particular degree of regard, spoke to her with tenderness, by the name of my «fair sister,» and always knew her, though he could distinguish no one else. But as the House of Orleans did not succeed to any considerable share of power by the king's malady, at least in the first instance, it could hardly be supposed to have been guilty of practising upon Charles's health.

At first it seemed as if the king was not unlikely to recover permanently from his malady, when his fits of insanity were again brought on, after a temporary convalescence, by an accident as extraordinary as that by which his disease had originally been manifested.

Charles was so far recovered as to take an interest in the festivities of his court, though not in the affairs of state (A.D. 1392). There was,

one night, displayed at court, a masque of particular splendour, in which the king himself acted a part. Six personages of the highest rank, the king himself being one of them, appeared, for the amusement of the party, disguised in the character of Silvans or Satyrs. Their dress consisted of canvass coats, pitched over, to which wool or flax was attached in loose flakes, to represent the character which they had assumed. They were linked together with chains, and formed a pageant which excited general curiosity. The Duke of Orleans used the privilege of his rank, to approach the Silvans with a torch, in order to discover who the masquers were. Unhappily, their dress being highly inflammable, the whole group was on fire in an instant. Linked together, in the manner described, there was little chance of escape; yet the general cry of the perishing group was to save the king, even while they themselves were in the agonies of a death so painful. The Duchess of Berri, who was speaking with the king at the moment when the accident took place, had the presence of mind and resolution, to wrap that unhappy monarch in her mantle, and save him from a death, which, in his condition, however painful and horrible, might have been a merciful dispensation. Another of the unhappy masquers plunged himself into a cistern of water, which chanced to be near. The remaining four were so dreadfully burnt, that they all died in great agony.

The natural consequence of so horrible an ac-

cident was the return of the king's malady in its fullest extent; and, as he never afterwards recovered the perfect use of his reason, he must be considered as a lunatic for life, whose insanity was chequered with a few intervals of reason. In consequence of this lamentable condition of the monarch, the king and kingdom were alike overwhelmed with a tide of calamities.

It became absolutely necessary to provide a regent to carry on the business of the state; and a quarrel arose in the royal family who should be preferred to that important office. The Duke of Orleans and the Duke of Burgundy both preferred claims to this eminent trust. The Duke of Orleans, the king's brother and heir, was legally entitled to hold this office: the king, during his rare intervals of reason, gave his opinion to this effect: nor was this prince unfitted for the situation by personal qualifications. He was a handsome man, and possessed all those exterior accomplishments which gain the admiration of the inferior orders. But the Duke of Orleans was a licentious voluptuary, preferring pleasure to principle, and not extremely select in chusing the road by which he sought the former. He was also only twenty years old at the time when the king's incapacity was first admitted, and was not, therefore, considered as sufficiently ripe in years to take upon him the high responsibility of the regency.

The Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, uncles of the king, might entertain the next pretensions to

this high office. Of these, the Duke of Berri was oldest; and in so far preferable: but he was a man of weak parts, and disposed, by habit, to defer to the talents of his brother, the Duke of Burgundy, whom he did not affect to rival. He was also unpopular from his mal-administration, upon a former occasion, of the county of Languedoc, which had given just cause for great clamour against him. This unambitious prince, therefore, was contented to look for such subordinate power as he might obtain by means of his younger brother's preferment, and added his interest to that of Burgundy to have the latter raised to the regency, of which he had for some time exercised the duties, during the king's minority, though without attracting much popular applause.

The Duke of Burgundy was, therefore, raised to the regency; but not without a struggle between him and his nephew, Orleans, in the course of which the fatal quarrel took its rise between the rival branches of Orleans and Burgundy, which so long distracted the kingdom of France with civil violence, and occasioned the commission of so many crimes, and the spilling of so much blood.

It was the first step of this regent, when possessed of the administration of France, to visit upon the constable, Oliver de Clisson, the resentment which he had long nourished against him. When the constable appeared in his presence to give an account of his office, the Regent Bur-

gundy took the opportunity to insult him, upbraiding him with having too long, and too busily, interfered with the affairs of the kingdom, also taunting him with his having amassed much wealth, and concluding by desiring him to get him gone, as he valued the sight of his remaining eye. Clisson, apprehending worse treatment, from so brutal a reception, retired from the city of Paris, and took refuge upon his own territories in Bretagne.

Clisson's old enemy, the Duke of Bretagne, was not disposed to allow the constable a quiet refuge in his dominions, while, in the meantime, the regent was determined to exclude him from France. It was with this view that the Duke of Burgundy caused Clisson to be summoned before the Parliament of Paris, where the principal part of the charge against him seems to have been, that he possessed too much wealth to have been honestly acquired. As the constable did not appear before an assembly in which his enemies were predominant, he was, in all form, exiled from the realm of France, and condemned to pay a fine of one hundred thousand marks of silver; at the same time, he was adjudged to be dispossessed of his office of constable, although he still retained the official baton, which was the symbol of the authority. In the meantime, the office of constable was conferred upon Sir Philip of Artois, Count d'Eu, the Duke of Burgundy finding it difficult to get any one who would venture to accept it in the room of Clisson, who,

after the death of Bertrand du Guesclin, had been generally esteemed the only man in France capable of exercising the office.

Meantime, Clisson made a strong party in his native country of Bretagne, where he had great power amongst the defeated party of Charles de Blois; the rather that he had a daughter married to the Count de Penthievre, eldest son of Sir Charles, and heir of his claims upon the duke-dom. Thus Clisson was odious to the reigning Duke of Bretagne, not only as his personal enemy, but as likely to revive, and establish in the person of his own son-in-law, the rival claims of Sir Charles de Blois.

A cruel war was entered into by Clisson and the duke, which was carried on, as usual, by skirmishes, taking of castles, and making of prisoners. The Duke of Bretagne, notwithstanding his being sovereign of the country, found few disposed to take his part in this matter; so that Clisson twice plundered him of all his plate; and, in fine, notwithstanding his enmity to Sir Oliver, the Duke was fain to make peace with him as an equal, and upon terms which Clisson considered as advantageous. An act of generous confidence on the part of Clisson closed the feud, and serves to show us, that although that wild age was incapable of being regularly bound by the terms of equity and good faith, they yet were fully sensible of the obligation arising from noble actions and frank reliance. The Duke of Bretagne, having desired an interview with Clisson, and

knowing well that since the treacherous arrest at Ermyne Castle, his invitation was not likely to be trusted without a pledge, sent one of his sons to be retained as a security that good faith should be observed towards Clisson during the meeting. That same night, however, Clisson, who seems to have been aware that the duke, with violent passions, united much irregular but generous feeling, sent back the hostage, and, in the fullest confidence of the duke's honour, kept the rendezvous without any security. John de Montfort, though he might be tempted to injustice, was highly sensible of confidence; and the more so, as he might be conscious it was undeserved. He admitted Clisson, not to a cold truce, but to a warm friendship, from which neither of them afterwards swerved.

The death of the Duke of Bretagne, not long afterwards, gave him an opportunity to show in turn his confidence in Clisson, whom he appointed as tutor to his orphan children, notwithstanding that the duty of such a guardian was inconsistent with the interest of the constable's grandchildren of the Penthievre family.

Notwithstanding the jarring interests between the family of the deceased prince and of his own daughter, Clisson undertook the charge with all the zeal which the duke had reckoned upon. Neither was he without temptations to betray his trust. He was reclining upon his bed, on one occasion, when his daughter, the Countess de Penthievre, entered the apartment, and intimated

to her father, with little circumlocution, a plan of putting to death the young De Montforts intrusted to his charge, and placing his grandchildren in the right to the duchy. For all other answer to her proposal, the old knight raised himself in his bed, and launched at her head the truncheon which he held in his hand. Flying from a repetition of this well-merited, though somewhat severe paternal admonition, the countess fell down stairs and dislocated her leg, by which accident, a lameness for life became the eward of her ill-timed and ill-chosen advice to her father.

I may also mention in this place the fate of Peter Craon, the deviser and perpetrator of so many crimes. He remained an exile, sentence having been pronounced against him in absence, on account of the assault upon Oliver de Clisson. During the treaty of marriage betwixt France and England (A. D. 1396), Richard II besought pardon for this man, which was accordingly granted. In appearance, at least, Craon testified a becoming penitence for the faults of a licentious youth, as well as a cruel and blood-thirsty manhood, and died, it is said, repentant of his crimes.

Clisson shortly after died in peace, honoured, beloved, and lamented, after having gone through so many dangers in the public service, and so many from private envy and hatred. It was rare that such a deadly feud as existed between the Duke of Bretagne, Clisson, and Peter Craon, came

to be finally terminated by peace and reconciliation.

In one respect the government of the Duke of Burgundy was a wise, for it was a frugal one. In his lucid intervals the king was entertained with hunting-matches and other pastimes, by which, perhaps, the duke hoped to divert his thoughts from the government of his kingdom. Sports and entertainments which the king could enjoy were carefully provided for him; and it is said, that playing-cards were invented for his amusement. But, while in his fits of lunacy, the expenses of the unhappy monarch were reduced to the least possible compass, which decency would admit, and often restricted within it.

These instances of economy, and others doubtless of a more praiseworthy character, enabled the Duke of Burgundy to pacify the complaints of the common people, by reducing the public taxes; nor was he altogether negligent of the affairs of the kingdom. He was regularly guided by the advice of parliament, who were convened every year; and, using the counsel of his brother, the Duke of Berri, as a species of colleague, the laws which they adopted, with the consent of that body, were so prudent and wholesome, that they were retained for many centuries.

During the Duke of Burgundy's administration, also, of which much that is evil may be said, the public peace was not disturbed by the destructive war with England, by which France had been so long ravaged. This was, indeed, owing

rather to the weakness of England, than to the prudence of the French regent. The reign of Richard II of England had been marked by public discord, popular tumult, and almost every event which can render a country incapable of foreign war; and during this general confusion, the quarrel with France, if not made up, was lulled to sleep from time to time by continued truces, until the year 1395, when Richard, then a widower, sent an embassy to demand in marriage the princess Isabel, eldest daughter of the reigning monarch Charles, but a girl of only six or seven years old. The French administration agreed to the match; but though the princess went to reside in England, the marriage was broken off by Richard's dethronement and death. The most important consequences of the treaty of marriage, otherwise so ill assorted, was the accommodation of all disputes between France and England, and, amongst other articles, the restoration of Brest to the dukedom of Bretagne. The internal transactions of France, during this distracted reign, were merely convulsions, occasioned by the license of the soldiers, and at times the riviving disputes between the French and English vassals. But there existed, besides, connexions with foreign powers, of which it is necessary to say something.

The unfortunate fate of the Duke of Anjou's expedition against Sicily and Naples has been already sufficiently dwelt upon; but the intercourse of the French with the Scottish nation is worthy

of some notice. We have already observed that love to the French, hatred to the English, and the distribution of considerable sums of money, had induced a nation, generally reckoned both poor and warlike, to attempt an invasion of England, in order to create a diversion in favour of Calais, which Edward III was then besieging. In this enterprise the Scots had the misfortune to lose a fine army, and leave their king, David II, prisoner in England. In the battle of Poictiers, a body of Scottish gentry, the flower of their kingdom, commanded by the celebrated Earl Douglas, shared the disasters of that bloody day. The French had always expressed themselves grateful for the assistance which the Scots had meant to give them, sorry for the loss which their allies had sustained, and willing to return the obligation when circumstances should put it in their power.

A period occurred in 1385, when such an opportunity of assisting the Scots, and carrying war into the northern limits of England, appeared favourable. The spearmen of Scotland formed a body of infantry whose impenetrable phalanx defied even the shock of the men-at-arms. Their irregular cavalry were unequalled for the width to which they could spread devastation. But their archers, whom they drew from the Highlands, were far inferior to those of the English; and the general poverty of the country rendered their regular cavalry comparatively few and ill appointed.

The French council conceived, that by assisting the Scots with forces of the latter description, they might place their allies upon a footing with the English. A thousand men-at-arms were sent to Scotland under the Admiral of France, John de Vienne, a veteran of approved talents. He was also furnished with a large sum of money to distribute among their Scottish friends. At first, allies who came so well provided were received with general gratulation. But the strangers speedily found that they had come to a wild and savage country, destitute of the useful arts, and dependent upon Flanders even for horse-shoes and the most ordinary harness. On the other hand, the Scots were disgusted and displeased with the natural petulance of these military strangers, who interfered in their families with an alert gallantry, which the French conceived to be a mark only of breeding, and a privilege of their rank. The Frenchmen were yet more disappointed upon finding the cautious manner in which the Scots proposed to conduct the war, which, though admirably calculated to distress the English, afforded little prospect either of gain or glory to adventurers like themselves. Instead of rushing on with precipitate rashness to a general action, as the French wished and desired, the Scottish warriors, taught by experience, suffered the English army to enter their eastern frontier, and to do such damage as they could, which was very little, where flocks, herds, and cattle, forage, and all that could support an army,

had been previously driven away, or destroyed. In the meantime, when the English were engaged in traversing what may be called a howling desert, the Scots, who even excelled their neighbours in the arts of devastation, poured a desultory but numerous army upon the western frontier of England, laying all waste, and doing more mischief than their own eastern provinces could have received from the southern foe, had they been plundered from sea to sea.

In this species of war the French men-at-arms could acquire neither fame nor profit; they lost their horses, lost their armour, and at length lost their patience, execrating the poor, rude, and pitiful country of Scotland, on account of which they had suffered so much trouble. What was worse, they found great trouble in obtaining permission to return to France. Wine they had little; their bread was of barley, or of oats; their horses were dead from hunger, or foundered with poor living; and when they would have brought them to sale, to relieve their pressing occasions for money, there were no purchasers in Scotland disposed to enter upon such a bargain. The Scots also insisted on a large sum, due, they said, for the expense of their allies' maintenance, and for the damages which they had in different ways done to Scotland. De Vienne himself was obliged to remain a hostage in Edinburgh, until these sums were paid by the government of France to the Scottish Factors at Bruges. Thus the Scots took farewell of their

allies with execrations upon their affected delicacy and epicurism, their self-importance and insolence, while the French inveighed with no less justice against the barbarity of the Scots, and the miserable poverty of their country.

France, however, was in this reign to send forth an expedition still more important, and doomed to terminate in a far more disastrous manner, than that to Scotland. Crusades had long ceased to be the fashionable employment of Christian monarchs; but it was not possible that they could see with indifference the progress which the victorious Turks were daily making, both in the Grecian empire, and in the kingdom of Hungary. Sigismund was so apprehensive of the danger incurred from these infidels, under command of the celebrated Bajazet, who had already for eight years besieged Constantinople, and was now threatening the frontiers of Hungary, that he endeavoured, by the most humble applications at the court of France, to obtain the assistance of a body of volunteers, who would merit Paradise, by combating against the infidels, «making use,» says the chronicle, «of many words of great love, such as kings and such persons write to each other in circumstances of necessity.» Similar letters were written by Sigismund to other Christian European courts.

John Earl of Nevers, son of the Duke of Burgundy, and regent of France, although not yet a knight, was desirous to go on this expedition, and Lord Guy of Tremouille expressed a desire

to accompany him. The regent yielded a reluctant consent. The news being generally spread that the young Earl of Nevers intended to put himself at the head of a volunteer force, to assist in repelling Bajazet from the kingdom of Hungary, a general impression was made upon all the true sons of chivalry, who flattered themselves with the hope of obtaining such a complete victory as would enable them to conquer Turkey, recover Syria, and all the Holy Land, and outdo whatever had been attempted by the great princes in their crusades.

The army of what might be called crusaders, which assembled on this occasion (A. D. 1395), amounted to more than one hundred thousand men, and made such a splendid show when they reached Hungary, that Sigismund proudly exclaimed—«Why should we fear the Turks? If the heavens themselves should fall, we are numerous enough to uphold them with our lances.»

The impatience of his auxiliaries to advance, induced the King of Hungary to levy what forces he could, and move forward with his allies, so that they might the sooner come to deeds of arms. They crossed the Danube, and formed the siege of a town called Nicopolis, which was garrisoned by the Turks. Bajazet, in the mean time, had raised a very large army, with which he approached the camp of the besiegers, showing only a small part of his force in the centre, and concealing a very large force upon each wing. A party reconnoitring brought news to the Chris-

tian camp that the Turks were advancing, but no exact account of their numbers or disposition. The Christians instantly took arms, but were considerably heated with the wine they had been drinking. The French claimed the honour of making the onset; and they were drawn up in front of the centre of that part of Bajazet's force which was open and uncovered.

The King of Hungary's mareschal then advised the strangers to halt, and keep their ground without advancing, until a reconnoitring party, which Sigismund had sent out, should bring more exact intelligence than they had yet received concerning the enemy's force. The Hungarian had scarcely turned his horse, ere Philip of Artois, Constable of France, out of pure despite and insolence, commanded his banner to advance, in defiance of the orders, or rather advice, received. The Lord of Coucy, a knight of great fame, considered this a presumptuous proceeding; and, looking to the Admiral of France, John de Vienne, the same who commanded the French auxiliaries in Scotland, demanded what was to be done. «Sir,» answered the veteran, «where reason cannot be heard, pride must reign; since the constable will needs advance, we must follow him and support him.» They rushed forward, therefore, on what appeared to be the main body of the Turkish army, which retired before them, according to their sultan's previous commands. In the meantime, as the French advanced upon the centre, two strong

wings on either flank of the Turkish army, which had been hitherto concealed, threw themselves in the rear of the men-at-arms, and cut the French chivalry off from the main body of the Hungarians. This manœuvre was executed with the characteristic rapidity which procured for Bajazet the epithet of Ilderim, or Lightning. The army of Sigismund, being fifty or sixty thousand men, might still, by a desperate charge, have rescued their allies, and perhaps gained the battle. But the Hungarians, losing courage on seeing many of the French horses running back without riders, concluded that their vanguard was defeated, and fell, from the very apprehension, into great disorder, and retired, or rather fled, in confusion. The Turks, whose armies consisted chiefly of cavalry, made great havoc in the pursuit. The King of Hungary himself, with the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, escaped with difficulty; and the slaughter and carnage, both among the Hungarians and their auxiliaries, was very great; while most of the French knights who escaped death on the field of battle, had the sad alternative of becoming captive to the infidels.

Bajazet, greatly elated by his victory, took possession of the King of Hungary's tent, and, with the usual caprice of a barbarian, evinced at first a desire to be civil to, and familiar with, such nobles as were brought prisoners to his presence. He took credit to himself naturally for the great victory he had won, and boasted, it is

said, a pretended descent from Alexander of Macedon, in whose steps he affected to tread. But when the sultan had refreshed himself, and came to view the field of battle, the loss of his best and bravest Turks was so much greater than he had conceived, that his tiger propensities began to show themselves. He caused to be pointed out to him some few of the knights who were of the highest rank, and likely to pay the best ransom. These being set apart, with a view of preserving their lives, the rest, stript to their shirts, were brought before him, previous to being put to the sword.

There were present a great number of captives, of the highest blood and character in France, and other states of Europe; in all, more than three hundred gentlemen. The Turks stood around them with their drawn scimitars. Bajazet appeared, and received the supplication of all, for all were at his mercy. He looked upon his prisoners for a few moments, as a wild beast beholds his prey when he has made sure of it; and then turning away, made a sign to his soldiers, in obedience to which the unarmed prisoners were hewn to pieces without compunction.

The sultan, however, was not wanting in a species of clumsy courtesy which intermingled strangely with his cruelty. He caused to be brought before him the Earl of Nevers, to whom, on account of his high rank, he showed some deference, and asked him, which of three knights

he would wish to dispatch to Paris with the information of his captivity. The earl fixed his choice upon one whom Froissart calls Jacques of Helley, who had been formerly prisoner with the Saracens, and whose knowledge of their language and manners had been of great service to his countrymen. The other two knights were presently put to death; and Sir Jacques of Helley was dismissed, under the faithful promise that he should again return to the court of Bajazet when he had discharged his embassy.

The arrival of this messenger at Paris, with tidings so dismal, threw almost the whole kingdom into mourning; and it was the general report that France had sustained no defeat so disastrous since the fabulous combat of Roncesvalles, in which battle romance stated the twelve peers of Charlemagne to have fallen. Amid the number of tears which were shed, and the grief which was displayed on every side, the regent Duke of Burgundy was the only person who experienced some comfort in the general distress. It is said, he contrived to extort from the French people, for the ransom of his son, the Earl of Nevers, a much larger sum than was necessary for the purpose, or than was actually paid to Bajazet.

Thus closed the fourteenth century upon the kingdom of France, neither leaving it healed of its disorders, nor in a way to be speedily cured of them; fortunate, however, in this, that the dissensions betwixt York and Lancaster, now

commenced by the rebellion of Bolingbroke, was likely so far to occupy the attention of the English nation, as must necessarily prevent the recommencement of a war which had been long the scourge of both nations.

CHAPTER XIII.

Factions of Orleans and Burgundy—Threatened Rupture with England—The Duke of Orleans appointed Regent, and again deprived of that office—Death of Philip of Burgundy—John the Fearless succeeds him, and the Dissensions with Orleans continue—Reconciliation of the two Dukes—their hatred again bursts out—Murder of Orleans—Burgundy, who instigated this crime, obtains a full pardon, but, having gone to quell an Insurrection at Liege, the Doom of Treason is pronounced against him—Burgundy advances upon Paris—The Adherents of Burgundy termed Cabochins, those of Orleans, Armagnacs—the Armagnacs obtain assistance from England—King Charles during an Interval of his Malady manifests the utmost indignation at this League with England, and marches in person against the Armagnacs—the French Nobles assemble in Paris, and compel the Armagnacs and Cabochins to be reconciled to each other—On an Insurrection of the Parisians, the Dauphin calls to his assistance, and reorganizes, the Orleans Party—Burgundy retires from Paris, but is recalled by the Dauphin, on some disagreement between him and his mother, Queen Isabella—On the approach of Burgundy, the Dauphin again invites the Armagnacs to join him—Charles himself, partially recovered, marches against Burgundy, and compels him to sign a Pacification—State of England—Conclusion.

OUR last chapter left France in a situation equally extraordinary and disastrous. The unfortunate

monarch Charles VI was so incurably affected with his disorder, that a light like that of a sunbeam in a tempest seemed only from time to time to gleam on his deranged imagination, and enabled him to express occasionally some opinion on politics, which those of his relatives who had for the time the nearest access to his person, never failed to mould so as to serve their own purposes. Thus, without having, properly speaking, any will or inclination of his own, the unfortunate prince could assume the appearance of expressing one, and was sometimes brought forth to do so even in public, which, as his deficiencies were well known, could only have had the effect of degrading his government.

At other times, the person of Charles was strictly secluded. His tent and his banner were displayed in marches and sieges; but the curtains of the pavilion were never raised, nor was the person of the sad inhabitant ever visible to his soldiers.

During the king's incapacity, the two factions of Orleans and Burgundy, although their representatives were connected in the near relation of uncle and nephew, contended with the most bitter strife for the power of administering the government. The Queen Isabella, wife of Charles VI, an ambitious and violent woman, was supposed to have espoused the interest of the Orleans party, with a warmth which, as the duke was a libertine young man, was prejudicial to her reputation. The Duke of Orleans, therefore, and

his wife Valentina, who possessed a strong personal interest with the king, were for the present leagued with Queen Isabella for the purpose of depriving the regent Duke of Burgundy of that power which he held in the administration. We shall afterwards see this intrigue assume a different form.

Each of these factions took the most violent and unscrupulous mode of doing whatever might injure their rivals in the public opinion. Both of them called in the aid of physicians, in the hope of devising some cure or alleviation of the king's malady; and as the empirics who were permitted, if not encouraged, to make new experiments upon the royal patient, usually left Charles worse than they found him, their want of success was always laid to the charge of the party which had consulted them. The Duke of Orleans condemned to the flames, as a magician, a learned man, named Jean de Bar, who had been employed by the Duke of Burgundy to effect the king's cure. The regent, in retaliation, commanded the prosecution of two Cordelier churchmen, who had been brought by the Orleans faction to attend the king as physicians, and whose experiments had consisted in deep and dangerous incisions made on the head of their royal patient. The Duke of Burgundy caused them both to be hanged.

In the meantime, the external peace of the kingdom of France was threatened, while the government of the country was a prey to discor-

dant factions. The contract of marriage between Richard II and the young princess of France, Isabella, though absurdly ill-suited as regarded the age of the parties, had yet the great advantage of procuring a prolonged and solid peace betwixt two nations, whose chief miseries for two centuries had been occasioned by inveterate and senseless hostilities, from which neither had gained advantage, while both had suffered immense loss in blood and treasure. But the dethronement and death of Richard II (A.D. 1399) was an unexpected stroke, which dissipated all these happy prospects; and the unfortunate Charles, who happened to be in one of his lucid intervals at the time, was so much affected by the melancholy tidings, that he relapsed into one of his most outrageous fits of insanity.

The French princess, the intended wife of Richard so soon as she should have arrived at a proper age, was still residing at the court of England; and although her proposed husband was dethroned, and it is believed murdered, Henry IV would fain have retained her there as a future bride for his son, afterwards Henry V. This match, which would in all probability have secured a stable peace between the countries, must have been highly to the advantage of both. But the French nation were incensed at the death of Richard, whom they looked upon as their ally; and the lords of Gascony, who had hitherto followed the English interests, regarded the same unfortunate monarch as the son of their great

prince Edward, and their countryman, Richard having been born at Bordeaux. The French, aware of this feeling, were universally disposed for war for the recovery of Bordeaux and the other English possessions in France, in preference to a peaceful alliance with that power under its new dynasty. But the malady of their king, and the contests between the factions of Orleans and Burgundy, rendered the French as unfit for prosecuting the war, as they were averse to continuing at peace; and thus a reinforcement from England, under command of the Earl of Worcester, easily secured Bordeaux to the English crown.

In the year 1400, during a casual absence of the Duke of Burgundy from court, the opposite party had the art to extract from the king, then in one of his twilight intervals, a commission, appointing his brother, the Duke of Orleans, his lieutenant and regent of the kingdom, at such periods when he himself should, by the visitation of God, be prevented from administering the government. This commission was partly obtained by the influence of the queen, who at this time hated the Duke, or rather the Duchess, of Burgundy; and it was received the more willingly by the people, as, by the law of France, the Duke of Orleans was the rightful claimant of the regency, and his youth could not now, as formerly, be objected to.

But the new regent used his power very unskilfully. In the quarrel between the two Popes,

which still subsisted, the Duke of Orleans espoused the cause of Benedict, which was the most unpopular in France; he likewise imposed taxes both on ecclesiastics and on the laity, which, joined to a casual scarcity of provisions, rendered his government intolerably oppressive. A crisis speedily followed, in which the Duke of Orleans was deprived of the regency by an assembly of the great men of the kingdom. Both dukes then took arms, and a civil war seemed inevitable, when, by the interference of the Dukes of Berri, Bourbon, and other princes of the blood, it was declared that, to end the family dissensions, both Orleans and Burgundy should be excluded from the government of the kingdom, which was vested in the council of state, over which the queen was appointed to preside. This suspended, in appearance, the quarrel between the rival princes, and, for a time, neither attempted to assume the regency in person, though both exercised an indirect influence upon the different members of the council.

Philip, Duke of Burgundy, was afterwards again raised, by his nephew the king, to a more active share in the government, when he suddenly died upon a journey, so very much embarrassed by debts, that his duchess renounced any share in his movable succession; and, in testimony of her doing so, laid in the coffin of the deceased prince the keys of his household, and the girdle at which she wore them—a strange ceremony to take place at the funeral of a prince, who had at

his command all the revenues of France, and was not supposed over scrupulous in employing them to his own purposes.

John, Duke of Burgundy, who succeeded Philip, was called the Fearless. He possessed his father's power, although he had two brothers, each of whom inherited considerable territories, being Anthony, Duke of Brabant, and Philip, Count of Nevers, which last we saw unhappily distinguished at the battle of Nicopolis. But, above all, John, the eldest brother, had his father's ambition, and took up the family quarrel with the house of Orleans exactly where Duke Philip had left it.

The discord between the uncle and nephew came thus to subsist in full force between the two cousins. They disturbed the whole kingdom by their intrigues; and the Duke of Burgundy had, like his father, the address to secure a very strong party in the city of Paris, to which his house and faction had represented themselves as the preservers of the privileges of the city and university, and enemies to the imposition of excessive taxes. In the dissensions which followed, the dauphin, a young man of feeble talents, and no fixed principles, would have fled with his mother to the town of Melun, but was pursued by the Burgundian party, and brought back by force. Bloodshed seemed so near, that each prince chose his device. Orleans, to indicate his possessing the right of regency, displayed a hand grasping a club full of knots, with the motto

—*I envy it*—alluding to the feeling which he attributed to the opposite house. Burgundy, on the other hand, gave a carpenter's plane, with a Flemish motto—*Je houd*—that is, *I hold*—the means of smoothing the knotted club.

Mutual friends and relations, chiefly of the blood royal, once more interfered, and brought the two contending princes (A. D. 1405), to a solemn agreement. They dismissed their troops on each side, met together in the hotel of the Count de Saint Paul, embraced each other, and took the sacrament at the same time. They were now employed for a short time in the public cause, the one against the English in Guienne, the other against Calais; but the campaign proved short and inefficient, and was closed by a truce of one year's duration.

It would appear that the hatred of the two dukes became the more bitter, that the late reconciliation obliged them to observe certain forms of dissimulation, since in private the Duke of Burgundy, at least, meditated ending the feud by putting his rival to death.

It was on the 23d of November that the Duke of Orleans, being at the queen's apartments, where he usually spent the evening, was summoned to wait on the king immediately. While he obeyed this command, and traversed the streets mounted on a mule, accompanied only by two gentlemen and a few valets on foot, he suddenly fell into an ambush posted for the purpose. The leader of these ruffians was one D'Hacquetonville, person-

ally injured, as he conceived, by the Duke of Orleans. This man struck at the duke with his battle-axe, and, missing his head, the blow fell on his right hand, which it struck off. «I am the Duke of Orleans,» cried the party assailed. «It is he whom we seek,» answered his assassins, with wild exultation, and, striking the prince from his saddle, they cut him limb from limb by their furious and united assault. They had taken every precaution to ensure the perpetration of the murder, and their own subsequent escape. The streets were strewed with caltrops, for laming the horses of such as should attempt a pursuit: a house was set fire to by the assassins, who cried «Fire, fire!» to distract the attention of the people, while the Duke of Orleans's retinue were crying «Murder!»

In the morning, the duke's body was discovered, so much hacked and dismembered, that the streets were sprinkled with his blood and brains, while some of the limbs could scarcely be found by his weeping attendants. Such, indeed, was the inveteracy of the factions, that the Burgundians only said to each other, with a sneer, «See, if the knotty mace has not been well smoothed by the plane!»

The Duke of Burgundy at first affected innocence and surprise. On a threat, however, to arrest some of his followers, he showed such signs of guilt, that the princes of the blood advised his retiring from Paris to his own dominions, which he did with much precipitation. But when in a

place of safety, he recovered his spirits; and, finding that his party were willing to support him, without much regard to his innocence or guilt, he assembled an army of his own subjects of Burgundy and Flanders, and advanced upon Paris, having with him, as an apologist, or rather vindicator, a doctor in theology, named John Petit, who, in the face of the dauphin and princes of the blood, arraigned the late Duke of Orleans as a traitor, and shamelessly justified the Duke of Burgundy for the vile murder accomplished on the body of his near relation. The Duke of Burgundy, assured of his superiority, demanded and obtained from the dauphin, who began now to assume a lead in public affairs, as full a pardon for the death of the unfortunate Orleans as could be put into words. He caused the Admiral of France to be removed from office, his chief fault being that he had offered with two hundred knights to pursue the murderers of Orleans.

Nor would his demands have stopped there, had he not suddenly learned that the people of Liege were in arms against his father-in-law, their archbishop; and no sooner had Burgundy left Paris with his forces to quell this insurrection in Flanders, than the Orleans faction appeared in arms, in the capital, determined to take merited vengeance for the foul murder.

The number of the Duke of Burgundy's enemies was augmented by the appearance of Valentina, the widowed spouse of the deceased, in the deepest mourning, followed by all her house-

hold in the same attire of woe, seeming to invoke upon the murderer the vengeance demanded by the widow and the orphan. And although the Duchess of Orleans was prevented by fate from prosecuting her purpose, yet her death, which followed soon after that of her husband, was ascribed to the consequences of his assassination, and occasioned additional execrations on the perpetrators of the deed.

Owing to the sudden predominance of his enemies, judicial proceedings against the Duke of Burgundy were briskly undertaken before the parliament of Paris, and pushed on to extremity. The pardon he had obtained from the dauphin was declared void, and the doom of treason denounced against him.

Hardly had men sufficiently wondered at this change of fortune, when news arrived, that the Duke of Burgundy, having quelled the insurrection of the citizens of Liege after much slaughter, was now approaching Paris at the head of his army, breathing defiance against all his enemies —a threat the more formidable, as the greater part of the populace of Paris were known to be influenced by him; so much so, that even his vile crime had made no impression in his disfavour on the violent-tempered citizens, who were little accustomed to regard the life or death of an individual, even although a prince of the blood, or to consider in what manner he came to his grave, provided he fell in the prosecution of a death feud.

The city of Paris, and country of France, were now split into two violent factions, who distinguished themselves by badges, and by the designations of their parties. This was the only circumstance which evinced decency and a sense of shame—that they did not distinguish themselves as Burgundians or Orleanists. The former party wore red sashes, with the cross of Saint Andrew, and were called Cabochins, from Caboche, a butcher, a distinguished partisan of the party of Burgundy. The followers of Orleans, on the other hand, wore white sashes, with Saint George's cross, and termed themselves Armagnacs, from the earl of that name, the father-in-law of the Duke of Orleans, accounted, from his spirit and activity, the buckler of his cause. He was made Constable of France by his son-in-law's interest, and was looked upon as his principal partisan. The Parisians took up arms as Cabochins; and a body of actual butchers were the most active in the cause of Burgundy.

The Orleans party moved upon the capital, and threatened Paris with a siege. But the Duke of Burgundy threw himself into the city with a body of select troops, part of whom were English, with which nation, in the desperation of his hatred to the faction of Armagnac, the duke had made a league. These English auxiliaries were commanded by the Earl of Arundel, and conducted themselves with such good discipline, that they were of great service to the cause of Burgundy.

The Orleans faction, who remarked this ad-

vantage of the opposite party, and suffered by it, felt little difficulty in entering into similar transactions on their own part, and opened a treaty with Henry IV of England. The offers of the Armagnacs were too high to be neglected by Henry IV, who was just obtaining a breathing time from the troubles and insurrections with which his reign had been successively disturbed, by the Welsh, the Percys, and others who were dissatisfied with his title or his government. At this period of quiet, it was natural he should look abroad to France, now engaged in a bloody and remorseless civil war, and engage to support the party that should grant him the best terms. Or perhaps, in his heart, the English king desired, by assisting the one French party after the other, to prevent the civil war from drawing to a conclusion, which afforded England a prospect of recovering her French dominions.

It is certain that, with whatever intention, Henry IV listened favourably to the proposal of the Orleans or Armagnac faction, who offered to surrender all the provinces of Gascony to the English, with other advantages. Tempted by these offers, he engaged, 18th May, 1412, to send to the assistance of the Armagnacs, a thousand men-at-arms, and three thousand archers. To show himself more serious in their support, the King of England's younger son, Thomas of Clarence, was to be appointed general of the auxiliary army.

Amid these preparations, in which the horrors of foreign invasion were added to those of civil war, Charles VI awakened from a long fit of stupor, and became sensible, as he sometimes was for intervals, to the distresses of the country of which he wore the nominal crown.

Isabella of Bavaria, the wife of the unfortunate king, had contrived to take a great share in the government in the names of her lunatic husband and her youthful son, whose station of next heir to the crown would have given him great authority, had he known how to use it. It was much to the credit of the French, that their loyalty to the king remained unshaken even when in such deplorable circumstances. His mandates, when his mind was strong enough to express them, were listened to with respect by the chiefs of both parties; and, as the caprice of the queen threw her into the one or the other side of the contending factions, he was heard to denounce vengeance for the death of Orleans, his only brother, and on the other hand, undertake the defence of the Duke of Burgundy, his murderer.

Thus passively did the poor king follow the views of the faction under whose charge he chanced to be placed for the time, without expressing disgust at his own treatment, although we have one anecdote at least tending to show that even his means of living and support were strangely neglected by those who had his person

under their control, even though these were at the time his wife and eldest son.

So ill, we are assured, was the royal family provided for, that the governess of the royal household once complained to the unfortunate king that she had neither money nor means of procuring either provisions or other necessaries for the service of the royal children. «Alas!» said the king, «how can I help you, who am myself reduced to the same straits!» He gave her the golden cup out of which he had recently drunk, as the means of meeting the immediate necessity.

It appears that this unhappy prince, during the rare intervals of his melancholy disease, had the power of seeing, with some degree of precision, the condition in which the country stood at one given moment, and could then form a rational opinion, though he was totally incapable of deducing any arguments founded on what had happened before the present moment. His mind was like a mirror, which reflects with accuracy the objects presented to it for the time, though it retains no impression of such as formerly passed before it. His judgment, therefore, incapable of judging of affairs with a comprehensive reference to past events, or those who have been actors in them, was entirely decided by the light in which the present circumstances were represented by those interested in deceiving him.

Charles was therefore not a little indignant, on awaking from his illness in 1412, at finding the Armagnac party far advanced in a treaty, the principal article of which was the introduction of an English army into France; and while he felt natural resentment at a proceeding so unpatriotic, and so full of danger to his kingdom, he was not aware of the fact, or could not draw the conclusion, that the Duke of Burgundy and his party had been guilty of exactly the same error when they accepted the assistance, under the Earl of Arundel, which had formed the most effective part of their garrison for the defence of Paris.

Greatly displeased, therefore, with the Dukes of Berri and Bourbon, with others included the Armagnac party, Charles marched in person against them, and besieged the city of Bourges, which was one of their strongholds. They expressed the utmost deference for the king's person, but alleged that he had not undertaken the expedition of his own free will, protesting at the same time that, excepting that Charles came, or rather was brought, in company of that licensed murderer, John Duke of Burgundy, the gates of Bourges should fly open at the slightest summons in the king's name.

While making these fair pretences, the besieged organized a desperate sally, with the view of making prisoners of King Charles and his eldest son Louis. In this they were disappointed, and found themselves so hard pressed in their

turn, that they were obliged to submit to conditions dictated by the king, in which both the parties of Armagnacs and Cabochins were obliged to renounce all their leagues with the English.

The English, in the meantime, under the Duke of Clarence, arrived, as appointed by the Armagnacs; and, as demonologists pretend of evil spirits, were much more easily brought into France than dismissed from thence. The Orleans party, by a large sum of ready money, and a much larger in promise, for which hostages were granted, persuaded the English prince to withdraw, but not without doing much damage to the country.

The French nobles then assembled together in Paris, without distinction of parties, the very names of the factions being declared unlawful; so anxious did the leaders appear to be to bury the very memory of their dissensions, while secretly they were labouring to rouse and increase them.

Peace being thus concluded betwixt the factions, there seemed to be some chance of stopping the bleeding wounds of the distracted country; but the utter disregard to the ordinary bonds of faith between man and man, threw all loose within a short time.

A war with England began now to appear a likely event, and a meeting of the States-General was convoked, to find the means of meeting the emergencies of the country; but they were dissolved without having proposed any ra-

dical cure for the distresses and dangers under which the kingdom laboured.

Louis, dauphin, and heir of the crown, was now beginning to take a decided part, independent of his mother, the queen, and he naturally cast his eye on the Duke of Burgundy, as the party by whom so incurable a wound had been dealt to the domestic peace of France. In his secret inquiries into this prince's conduct, he learned, or perhaps pretended to learn, that the duke had laid a plan for destroying the remaining branches of the house of Orleans. The informer was a certain Pierre des Essards, a creature of the Duke of Burgundy, whom he had raised to the dignified and wealthy situation of minister of the finances, and who now, being threatened by the dauphin with an examination of his accounts, changed sides, in the hope of eluding inquiries which he dared not meet. He received orders from the dauphin to secure the Bastille, then in some degree considered as the citadel of Paris.

Burgundy, better accustomed to the management of plots than his young kinsman, counteracted so effectually the scheme of the dauphin, that Des Essards no sooner had possessed himself of the Bastille, than all Paris was in uproar. The mob, commanded by Caboche, the butcher, took up arms. Des Essards, obliged to surrender the Bastille, was seized upon, and put to death. Caboche and his followers also killed some persons in high office about the dauphin's person,

and compelled the king himself, with the Dukes of Berri and Bourbon, to go to the parliament, wearing white hoods, the emblem of the party of Burgundy,—at least of the Parisian mutineers, and there register such edicts as the multitude were pleased to demand. The same rioters burst into the dauphin's private apartments, having heard the sound of violins there, and behaved with the utmost insolence, putting those who were present in immediate danger of their lives.

Impatient of mob-tyranny, which is of all others the most difficult to endure, the dauphin once more took measures for recalling and arranging the broken and dispersed party of the Duke of Orleans. At the call of the heir-apparent, in which he used the name of his father, the Orleans party entered Paris, while, by one of the changes common at the time, the Duke of Burgundy found he could not make his party good in the city, and retired, as was his wont, to his own territories of Flanders.

The queen, the dauphin, and the other lords, who had thus obtained power, notwithstanding their mutual interest, could not agree, how much soever it was their interest to do so. Isabella of Bavaria had the art to induce most of them to join against the authority assumed by her son, as too absolute and peremptory to be engrossed by one whom she described as a giddy youth, liable to be seduced by evil counsel. The queen even proceeded so far as to break into the dau-

phin's apartments, and seize upon four attendants of his person, whom she described as agents of the Duke of Burgundy. The young prince was so highly offended at this personal insult, that he wrote to the Duke of Burgundy that he was prisoner in his own capital, and invited him to come with his forces to his deliverance.

A slighter invitation would have brought the duke to Paris. He instantly advanced, at the head of a large force of his own vassals.

Charles, however, had in the meantime a transitory interval of recovery, and assumed for a short time the reins of government. He sent forth an edict, reproaching the duke with the murder of the Duke of Orleans, and published the confutation of Doctor John Petit's abominable apology for that vile assassination.

The dauphin Louis, also, whose temper seems to have been fickle and uncertain, again changed his party, and invited the princes of the Orleans faction into the city with so strong a body of horse (amounting, it is said, to eight thousand men), that they were able to disarm the whole citizens, save those of the better classes. He took also away from the Parisians the chains and barricades with which they were accustomed to block up their streets, and once more put it out of their power to disturb the public tranquillity. The Duke of Burgundy in the meantime advanced towards the walls of the city; but, dismayed at once by the royal edicts launched

against him by the dauphin deserting his cause, and by the reduced state of the Parisians, who used to be his best friends, he retreated as formerly, after a vain attempt on the capital.

But the king, surrounded with all the princes of the blood-royal, except the lineage of Burgundy, marched into Artois, the territories of the duke, with the purpose of completely subduing his territories. Charles demanded of the towns of Flanders, whether they meant to stand by the duke against their liege lord? and received the satisfactory answer, that the duke was indeed their immediate prince, but that it was not their purpose to assist him against the king, their lord paramount, or to shut their gates against their sovereign. The Duke of Burgundy, alarmed at finding himself deserted by his own immediate subjects of Burgundy and Flanders, began to negotiate for a peace with more sincerity than hitherto. It was concluded accordingly; but the Orleans party refused to sign it. Charles and his son insisted on the signature. «If you would have the peace lasting,» said the dauphin, «you must sign it;» which was done accordingly. This pacification, being preceded by the humiliation of the Duke of Burgundy, might be accounted the most steady which had yet been attempted between the Armagnacs and Cabochins, and appeared to possess a fair chance of being permanent.

But it was not the pleasure of Heaven to prolong the state of foreign peace, or truce at least,

which France had enjoyed during her domestic divisions, and which prevented England from taking advantage of them. During some years Henry IV of England had reigned, an unpopular king, with an uncertain title, and could not, owing to disturbances at home, profit by the disunion of the French. But at the time of this pacification between Charles and his subjects, the English king had just died, and was succeeded by his son, the celebrated Henry V, a young hero, beloved by the nation, and who breathed nothing save invasion and conquest against his neighbours, the scars of whose disunion were still rankling, though apparently closed.

And as the issue of the strife which ensued was remarkable, I shall here close my TALES for the present, not unwilling to continue them, if they shall be thought as useful as those from the History of Scotland.

THE END.

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